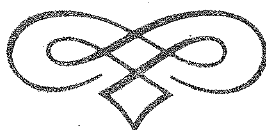


AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF VEDIC STUDIES
AYURVEDIC HEALNG CORRESPONDENCE COURSE



AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF VEDIC STUDIES
P.O. BOX 8357
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AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF VEDIC STUDIES
AYURVEDIC HEALING CORRESPONDENCE COURSE
A Home Study Program

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PART I. LESSON 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE AYURVEDIC CORRESPONDENCE COURSE

Ayurveda is the traditional medicine, the natural healing system of India and its cultural sphere. It is probably the oldest health care system in the world, with roots going back over 5000 years as the renowned "Mother of All Healing". In addition, it is one of the most comprehensive healing systems in the world, dealing integrally with body, mind and spirit. It is also one of the newest and most complete systems of natural healing to be introduced into the West.

Ayurveda affords much extraordinary knowledge and many opportunities for practice, career development and for providing service to humanity. Those who study it and learn to practice it today are on the forefront of a great movement in healing that will gain many adherents and have a great effect upon the world in the years to come. Hence though Ayurveda is still not well known and though its practice is still not well developed in the Western world, it is for that very reason an excellent time to learn it.

Ayurveda is still taught throughout India today and most of the Ayurvedic schools are full. Usually a five or six year program is followed at an Ayurvedic college. These courses are now beginning to be taught in English, so it is not always necessary to know the Indian dialects to take such programs. However, much of what is taught may not be entirely applicable for the conditions of modern Western culture without adaptation.

Hence other forms of Ayurvedic courses are being developed for westerners. This correspondence course is allied with such programs being taught in the West through various Ayurvedic schools and practitioners. It aims at filling the gap between the study of books and the taking of residential programs, which many of us are unable to do. It includes most of the material covered in the two year Ayurvedic programs now given in the West.

A NEW MODEL OF AYURVEDIC PRACTITIONER

For Ayurvedic practice in the Western world a new model of Ayurvedic practitioner is needed. As Ayurveda does not have a legal status and is unlikely to have one soon, some reorientation is needed. Many of the more medical diagnostic procedures and mineral remedies used by Ayurvedic practitioners in India are illegal if done here. Hence this course does not merely aim at teaching Ayurveda as it is done in India. It aims at adapting Ayurveda and establishing a new definition of an Ayurvedic practitioner that can work in our situation today.

Such new Ayurvedic practitioners will be health educators and life-style counselors using natural and safe tools such as diet, herbs, yoga and bodywork.

AYURVEDA AND OTHER HEALING MODALITIES

Ayurveda is useful with other healing modalities and can be applied in several different ways---

1. YOGA: Ayurveda is originally a branch of Yoga and it can be integrated very well in Yoga therapy. Yoga teachers and practitioners will find it of special importance in this regard.

2. HERBAL MEDICINE: Ayurveda contains perhaps the most sophisticated science of herbal energetics and a comprehensive system of herbal treatment. Any herbalist will find much value in its approach, which also has much in common with the older Greek and European herbal tradition and its system of the biological humors.

3. NUTRITION: Ayurveda contains the most complete system of constitutional medicine and shows us how to formulate diets relative to individual constitutional needs. It is therefore important to dietary and nutritional therapy of any kind and can be applied on this level alone and give very good results for the treatment of many conditions.

4. BODY WORK: Ayurveda has a system of points in the body, the marma points, like the acupuncture points, and a knowledge of the energy channels (nadis) of the subtle body. It has special massage techniques that make it useful for any body work practitioner. Its general concepts can be aligned in this direction.

5. COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGY: Ayurveda offers a complete system of life-style counseling and is part of the Yogic system of psychological and spiritual counseling. Ayurveda is also significant for any counselor and can be applied on this level alone by special Ayurvedic counselors.

6. ASTROLOGY: Ayurveda has been traditionally used along with Vedic Astrology (Jyotish or Hindu astrology) for usage in medical astrology. Astrologers will find its system useful both for its healing methods and counseling techniques. I have also written a correspondence course on Vedic Astrology that can be taken along with the Ayurvedic correspondence course for this purpose.

The use of Vedic Astrology along with Ayurveda gives a very excellent background for any life-counseling work from the domains of health to that of spirituality.

7. PANCHA KARMA CENTERS: Ayurveda has a special methods called Pancha Karma, including the therapeutic use of oil massages, sweat boxes, and detoxification procedures. While this course does not present all the knowledge necessary to do this, it does give the foundation for it. Such centers are opening up throughout the country and roles as Pancha Karma technicians are becoming available.

8. OTHER HEALTH CARE PRACTICES: Ayurveda can also enhance the practice of medical doctors, chiropractors, acupuncturists, nurses, physical therapists and other practitioners.

Some proponents of Ayurveda in this country have suggested that Ayurveda be limited to medical doctors. We do not agree with this view. We feel it will tend to stifle the development of Ayurveda in the Western world. Few medical doctors are interested in Ayurveda, though more will be in time. Its interest is more by those outside the medical establishment, those looking for alternatives to it and often emphasizing self-care. As a practice, therefore, the educational and counseling side of Ayurveda must precede the clinical side and Ayurveda has, perhaps more than any other system of healing, more to offer on this health and life-style educational side.

Ayurveda is a form of naturopathic medicine and fits in more properly with natural and spiritual healing modalities.

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GOALS OF THE COURSE

This course aims at giving the basic background of Ayurvedic knowledge useful in all these approaches, including Ayurvedic Anatomy and Physiology, Ayurvedic Psychology (Sankhya and Yoga), Diagnostic Methods (like constitutional analysis or pulse diagnosis) and Treatment Methods (including diet, herbs and gems). It provides the fundamental knowledge necessary for any pursuit of Ayurveda.

It is most specifically aligned with the herbal and nutritional approach of my two other books on Ayurveda, AYURVEDIC HEALING, A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE and THE YOGA OF HERBS. AYURVEDIC HEALING supplements the course with the differential diagnosis of disease conditions and outlines the treatment of common diseases Ayurvedically. THE YOGA OF HERBS gives a workable Ayurvedic materia medica, which is expanded in AYURVEDIC HEALING.

The course is very useful generally for training as an Ayurvedic Life-counselor or Ayurvedic Health-educator, as well as Ayurvedic Herbalist.

This holistic model of Ayurveda deals more with general life management and constitution balancing. It is not as specifically tied to the medical model and to the use of strong therapies to treat severe diseases, as these are difficult to apply in this country, but it is a good foundation for studying more technical Ayurvedic medicine also.

The individual who has completed this course and all of its questions and understood its principles should be in a position give Ayurvedic counseling and help educate people as to their basic constitution and how to deal with their general disease propensity. Of course, additional study is recommended, as well as practical experience. But the correspondence course is a good foundation for these also, and can make them much more effective and useful.

Special seminars and advanced study for those taking the course can be made available, as well as connection to Ayurvedic schools in India for further study.

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FORMAT OF COURSE

The Ayurvedic course consists of a series of lessons or chapters. Each is designed to cover a major topic and is expected to require one or two sittings or class times (about 3 hours) to complete. Some lessons may be found to be more or less difficult than this. All lessons are not equally easy or difficult. They are divided more by topic than by the time it may take to do them. One can take a lesson a week, two or three or however many one can adequately assimilate. The lessons also become progressively more difficult as the course develops.

Usually it is better not to go on to the later chapters until the earlier ones have been understood. There is no time limitation to the course. Each individual can go at his or her own pace. But it is better to set it up a schedule of study for yourself and attend to it with some regularity.

QUESTIONS AND TESTING POLICY

Each such chapter has STUDY QUESTIONS that the student should answer on their own (please do NOT send these back to us) to assure that they have learned the main points of the chapter. Not all the material in each chapter has equal weight, so what is more significant will be evident from the questions.

Some chapters have special STUDY EXERCISES. These are also to be done on an individual basis and are NOT to be handed in. Failure to do them, however, will greatly detract from the efficacy of the course. Some are ongoing projects to give an enduring Ayurvedic perspective to your life.

At the end of each booklet is a FINAL TEST. These questions should be answered as thoroughly as possible on a separate sheet of paper and mailed back to the AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF VEDIC STUDIES, PO Box 8357, Santa Fe, NM 87504-8357

These Final Tests will be graded and returned, usually within two to three weeks. If the answers are good the individual can move on to the next section. If they are not sufficient, some review will be recommended perhaps along with answering the questions again.

Answers are generally found in the course material but SOME may require additional thinking based upon it, as we are stressing the development of creative intelligence and not just the looking up of answers in a book.

Hence if you cannot find the direct answer to a question in the course, see if you can discover an answer to it by your own creative thinking based upon the principles taught in the course.

Please note that this course is meant to be thorough and engaging, to really teach the foundation Ayurveda and not just give an introduction to aspects of it.

Should the student have additional questions based on the course material they can call about them or they can be sent in writing. The student is welcome to establish a direct relationship with the teacher. Generally phone calls are preferable to written questions and can be dealt with quicker.

If such questions will be answered by further material in the course, no written reply will be given other than a note.

The phone number available to call for questions is (505)-983-9385. Saturday before noon (Mountain Time) or weekdays 9-11 a.m. are usually good. This number can be used for any additional questions the student may have, even on topics not mentioned in the course as long as they are in the field of Ayurveda or Vedic studies. We welcome student participation in the course. In other words, the course also gives you a connection with the teacher. It is not limited to the written material.

Additional audio and video tapes on Ayurveda are available and more are being prepared. Please contact the Institute if you are interested in them. They will require some additional cost, depending upon their nature.

Once the course is completed with the tests for all three sections, credit for it will be registered with THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF VEDIC STUDIES and a certificate will be given. This will entitle the student for advanced study programs. Should the student wish further direction and guidance in Ayurvedic or Vedic studies again they can call or write. Advanced study in India is with Ayurvedic schools and hospitals in Pune, which I have personally visited, lectured at and found to be quite suitable for foreign study in the English language.

STRUCTURE OF THE COURSE

The course comes in three sections, each in a separate binder, some with appendices dealing with glossary, bibliography etc.

Part I. deals with the Background of Ayurveda and with Ayurvedic Anatomy and Physiology and the Philosophical Background of Ayurveda.

Part II. deals with Constitutional Analysis, Analysis of the Disease Process, Diagnostic Measures and Ayurvedic Psychology.

Part III. covers Treatment Methods, Diet, Herbs, Oils, Aromas, Colors, Gems and Counseling and means of healing the mind. Part III. is as long as Parts I. and II. combined and contains much advanced material of diagnosis and treatment. Hence it will take longer to do. The other two parts are more or less introductory to it.

Part I. teaches the basic language of Ayurveda, Part II. its basic methodology and Part III. its primary treatment methods.

BOOKS FOR THE COURSE

The second and third part of the course require some readings from THE YOGA OF HERBS (Drs. Frawley and Lad, Lotus Press, 1986) and so if you do not have this book, please get a copy. AYURVEDIC HEALING, A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE (Dr. Frawley, Passage Press 1989) will be required and gives much information on the treatment of disease.

FROM THE RIVER OF HEAVEN: HINDU AND VEDIC KNOWLEDGE FOR THE MODERN AGE (David Frawley, Passage Press 1990) is a good general background for the understanding the field of Vedic Science.

There is no other required reading for the course but several books will be suggested in the bibliography to help expand the knowledge given in the course for those interested in further study. Another useful book is THE AYURVEDIC SCIENCE OF LIFE (Dr. Subhash Ranade, Edited by Dr. Frawley), as Dr. Ranade is one of the doctors and Ayurvedic teachers in India arranging advanced study for this course. His book is written according to the curriculum of study for foreign students as presented in India today. However, it does not cover such a wide area or diversity of topics as the correspondence course.

The course is designed to enable the student to better understand the available literature, which largely from India and from ancient sources by itself may not provide an adequate background for using Ayurveda in our life situations today. Once completing the course the student will be in a much better position to understand traditional books on the subject.

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INTRODUCTION TO PART I.

Part I. comes in two sections. First is "the Background of Ayurveda". This section shows the underlying system of Yogic science from which it arose and explains its key concepts, like the three gunas and five elements. Some may find this section to be too philosophical or theoretical. We should remember that teaches the spiritual concepts that are the basis of all Ayurvedic thinking and should not be undervalued. The concern of this course is not just Ayurveda as a physical science but as part of the spiritual sciences of the Vedas.

Second and much longer is "Ayurvedic Anatomy and Physiology", which presents the Ayurvedic understanding of how the body and mind function. This teaches most of the fundamental concepts of Ayurveda and many new terms will be found in it, probably more so than in the rest of the course. Hence this section may be slower or more difficult than what follows but once it has been learned well, what follows will be much easier to understand.

*****

Welcome to the study of this great ancient science. You are embarking on one of the great adventures of the human mind throughout the ages. You are following in the paths of many seers and yogis in a system that takes us to the source of all healing and the origins of life within our own hearts.

May you have the inspiration to follow it out completely and in the way that is most beneficial and creative for you.

May it assist you in your life and growth and aid you in being of service to all life.

NAMASTE!
Reverence to the Divine Spirit within you and within all.

Dr. David Frawley, O.M.D. (Oriental Medical Doctor, Doctor of Chinese Medicine), Vedacharya (Vedic Teacher)
Santa Fe, NM
October 1988

AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF VEDIC STUDIES
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PART I. LESSON 2

THE BACKGROUND OF AYURVEDA 1.

In order to understand Ayurveda we must first examine its background, the philosophy and world view from which it arises. This is quite different than our modern scientific view of the world, according to which Ayurveda usually cannot be properly appreciated. Ayurveda is based upon a particular cosmology, a special understanding of cosmic evolution and the evolution of life that we find in the system of Yoga. It was in the context of this system that the concepts of Ayurveda originally arose and it gives the broader ideas from which it can be understood.

Hence we should examine this section slowly and carefully, allowing time to assimilate it. It will be helpful to reexamine it again at the end of the course. The student is not expected to understand it completely in the beginning but its ideas should be kept in mind for better comprehension of what follows.

Before we go into this background cosmology let us first examine the spiritual and historical background of Ayurveda.

SPIRITUAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND
VEDIC AND YOGIC SCIENCE

Ayurveda is based upon the great stream of Vedic spiritual knowledge. This is the older spiritual tradition behind the later religions of India, particularly Hinduism, from which the whole of Indian culture derived and diversified. It has much in common with older Greek and Persian (Zoroastrian) thought as well.

Ayurveda is the medical aspect of the spiritual science we call "Vedic Science".

Ayurveda is the "veda", the knowledge, wisdom or spiritual science of "ayur", life or longevity.

It was originally classified as a supplementary Veda (Upaveda), of which it is foremost. Other important branches of the Vedas include Vedangas, limbs of the Vedas, somewhat closer to the Vedas than the Upavedas, the most important of which is Vedic Astrology (Jyotish), commonly used along with Ayurveda.

The practical side of Vedic Science is the system of Yoga. Yoga develops the ideas of Vedic philosophy into tools for the development of consciousness. Hence Vedic Science is also called "Yogic Science".

Ayurveda, therefore, is the healing branch or medical side of the system of yoga. It was devised by the yogis and seers to allow for maximum longevity for the pursuit of yoga, as well as the other legitimate aims of life, and is a gift of their compassion.

THE SPIRITUAL BACKGROUND OF AYURVEDA

While it is not necessary to study the Vedas to use Ayurveda, it is important to understand the spiritual background of Ayurveda. The Buddhists also have used Ayurveda with their own spiritual background, as have the Jains and the Sikhs and other groups in India and beyond. Yet all forms of philosophy and religion of India share the same basic principles, from which can be derived a spiritual background for Ayurveda as a whole. These can be summarized as follows----

*

"There is a fundamental truth or reality, a state of pure consciousness or pure awareness, that is beyond word and thought, in which is peace, bliss, compassion and liberation. To reach that is the goal of all life."

"Life is essentially a state of suffering or unhappiness and this is caused by the ego or principle of selfishness. The ego sets in motion a stream of action or karma, which ties us to a process of rebirth or transmigration in which is repeated sorrow."

"To eradicate this suffering it is necessary to negate the ego and silence the mind, as the ego is a function of the mind in its state of disturbance. This involves going beyond fear, desire and anger, the emotions that keep the mind disturb;ed."

"For this end certain ethical values must be followed like truthfulness, humility and non-violence. For this end the main practice is yoga and meditation. This goal is not a personal goal but part of the liberation of all life and so should be done for the unity and good of all and not just for our personal benefit."

"A disturbance or imbalance of the biological humors in the body contributes to this disturbance of the mind and so, harmonizing the body can contribute to this process of liberation. Hence the spiritual use of Ayurveda, which is also an expression of compassion."

Rig Vedas = Mantra
Sama Vedas = Songs, mantras in musical form
Yajur = action, yoga
Atharva = supplemental mantras for health, psychic protection, curing diseases

VEDIC BACKGROUND OF AYURVEDA

For those interested we will give a short account of this origins of Ayurveda. To do this we must first have an idea as to the Vedas from which it derives.

The primary Vedas are the mantric texts of the Rig, Yajur, Sama and Atharva Vedas. The "Rig Veda" or science of mantra gives the essential mantras or sacred chants of the seers, the basis of the Sanskrit language from which all later Hindu and Buddhist mantras arise, said to be the key to the vibratory structure of the universe on all levels, the book of cosmic law. It is considered by the Yogis to be the oldest book in the world and has passages that refer to dates before 6000 BC.

The "Sama Veda" or science of song develops these mantras into musical forms for transforming the mind and emotions.

The "Yajur Veda" or science of action develops them into outer and inner rituals or transformative actions, like the practice of Yoga.

The "Atharva Veda" adds supplementary mantras for more diverse conditions, including health and psychic protection. Because in the Atharva Veda actual mantras for treating diseases occur, as well as names of plants used for healing purposes, most traditional Ayurvedic texts relate Ayurveda primarily to the Atharva Veda.

These different aspects of Vedic knowledge are summarized in Vedantic texts, the main scriptures of India, the Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita. These latter are better translated, easier to understand and more accessible to the modern mind. Hence those interested in further Vedic studies should start with them.

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HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF AYURVEDA

Rig Veda gave birth to Ayurveda. Rig Veda written by 7 rishis. Bharadvaja wrote specifically about Ayurveda

Ayurveda derived originally from the Rig Veda at the dawn of human history after the ending of the last Ice Age. It is part of the immemorial wisdom of the race as passed down by the Himalayan rishis or seers. The seers were often doctors and medicine was held in high regard. Medicine was at the origin of all human culture as it is the most basic form of social caring. One of the seven seers of the Rig Veda, "Bharadvaja" was responsible for the transmission of the science of Ayurveda from the realms of the gods or higher cosmic intelligences (particularly Indra and the Ashwins). However, at this time Ayurveda was not as clearly differentiated from spiritual or psychic healing as in later times.

Some hold that this early form of Ayurveda became the basis for most of the other ancient forms of medicine and was the mother of all the healing sciences of the ancient world from Greece to China and perhaps even the New World. Indeed all these systems of traditional medicine are related, and Ayurveda has a central role among them.

Later in these ancient times, in what was still largely a legendary era, the work of a great seer, Dhanvantari of Benares, served to establish Ayurveda further and he is still looked back upon as the primal sage or deity of Ayurveda, through whose grace and guidance the science can be learned. He is considered to be an incarnation of Vishnu and is identified with Kakshivan, one of the most famous seers of the Rig Veda.

Ayurveda continued to develop along with the culture of India and when systems of philosophy and different schools of thought arose (c. 1000 BC), Ayurveda took on a more specialized form. This we find in classic texts like the CHARAKA SAMHITA and SUSHRUTA SAMHITA, which have become the prime textbooks of Ayurveda to the present day and which this course also follows. They appear to come from a pre-Buddhist era.

After this period the culture of India became more diversified and also spread into different areas like southeast Asia. Ayurveda was adapted by different religions, like the Buddhists and underwent modifications under the influence of different systems of thought, including the Chinese, Greek and Islamic, which it also influenced in turn.

The Medicine Buddha was looked to as the primal teacher of Ayurveda by the Buddhists and the great sage Nagarjuna, probably the most important figure in Mahayana (northern) Buddhist tradition after the Buddha, was an Ayurvedic doctor, wrote a commentary on SUSHRUT and developed many Ayurvedic alchemical preparations used to the present day. The Ayurvedic approach was renewed by Vagbhatta, a Buddhist, in his classic, the third of the main Ayurvedic texts, ASHTANGA HRIDAYA (c. 500 AD), (also used as a background for this course and commentaries on which are important in Tibetan medicine to today).

Much of the alchemical side of Ayurveda and its usage of special mineral preparations, which are so central to it today, evolved in the middle ages. They were devised to take the place of Soma, the magic healing plant of the early Vedic era, the secret to which was lost in later times.

Today Ayurveda, like other forms of traditional medicine, is struggling to maintain itself versus Western medicine and is adapting aspects of it to itself as well. In addition it is reintegrating itself with other forms of natural healing and naturopathic medicine. In India it is becoming more influenced by allopathy, though it has also been closely used with homeopathy. In its adaptation to the West it is returning more to a naturopathic form and also being reassociated with its spiritual background and taught once more along with yoga, which is already fairly widely known through out the world. Polarity therapy also uses much of Ayurveda in its principles.

Traditionally, Ayurveda has eight branches:

1. Internal medicine (kaya chikitsa)
2. Head and neck diseases (shalakya)
3. Surgery (shalya)
4. Treatment of poisoning (agadatantra)
5. Pediatrics (kaumara bhritya)
6. Rejuvenation (rasayana)
7. The use of aphrodisiacs (vajikarana)
8. Psychology (bhutavidya)

Its surgical side, however, has been replaced by allopathic medicine. Its psychological side has also been deemphasized. With this broad background, Ayurveda is an important, if not central component of the global holistic medicine that is developing today, and which is necessary to preserve the health of the planet.

Most of what we will learn of Ayurveda comes under its Internal Medicine section. Yet we will also explore in this course much of Ayurvedic Psychology. Rasayana and Vajikarana are important branches of Ayurveda for future medicine because they present a science of rejuvenation and revitalization, such as is necessary to deal with chronic diseases and modern degenerative conditions born of the breakdown of the immune system.

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PART I. LESSON 2

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What is the meaning of the term Ayurveda?
2. Why is the spiritual background of Ayurveda important?
3. In what historical context did Ayurveda evolve?
4. What are some of its potential future developments?
5. How are you looking to define yourself as an Ayurvedic practitioner?
6. What are the eight branches of Ayurveda?

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PART I. LESSON 3

THE BACKGROUND OF AYURVEDA 2.
AYURVEDIC COSMOLOGY

SANKHYA

Ayurveda uses the same basic terminology as the other Vedas (like Vayu, Agni and Soma). It develops the same basic Vedic mantric knowledge on a physical and vital level for the treatment of disease, promotion of longevity and development of physical immortality. As such, for its cosmology, philosophy and psychology, it also relies upon the great Vedic spiritual science called "Sankhya." Sankhya literally means "the system of enumeration" from its delineation of prime cosmic principles.

All the Ayurvedic classics have chapters on the Sankhya system as the necessary philosophical background and psychological structure for understanding the mental and spiritual side of Ayurveda. Hence it is also essential that modern students of Ayurveda also learn the fundamental principles of Sankhya or they may not be able to understand the deeper usages of Ayurvedic knowledge.

Sankhya is the underlying philosophy of the classical system of Yoga. It is one of the six classical schools of Indian philosophy. It was devised by the great seer Kapila, who is mentioned in Vedic literature from the Rig Veda to the Bhagavad Gita. Even the Buddha is said to have studied with two Sankhya teachers and his system of the five elements and five skandhas (personality aggregates) has much in common with it.

Traditionally, the main Sankhya text is THE SANKHYA KARIKA, the exposition of Sankhya of Ishwara Krishna (a different figure from Krishna of the Bhagavad Gita, who however, was also a great Sankhya teacher himself). This text has not been translated but the information below is based upon it from my study of it in the original.

In the Sankhya system, which Yoga, as its practical side, also uses, twenty four different cosmic principles (tattwas) are recognized.

THE TWENTY FOUR COSMIC PRINCIPLES OR TATTWAS

1. PRAKRITI/ Primordial Nature

Prakriti is the basic substance of the universe, both gross and subtle. She is the original form of matter or objectivity, the unmanifest essence or undifferentiated seed potential of all that can appear in name, form and action. She is not matter in the Western sense of the word as she is essentially the capacity for experience by the mind. She contains the prime attributes behind all things as forms of perception.

Prakriti means literally "the first power of action" or the primal form of resemblance. As the prime material of creation, at the start of the process of creation, she is also called "Pradhana" (which means "primal matter" or the first substance).

2. MAHAT/ Cosmic Intelligence

In the Vedic system all manifestation occurs through an underlying organic cosmic intelligence. In it are contained all the laws and principles the manifestation must follow, as well as the seed, ideal or archetypal forms behind the manifestation.

Mahat literally means "the great" and refers to the great principles behind life. The realm of Mahat in itself is the ideal creation that transcends time, the noumenal as opposed to the phenomenal realm. Mahat is the Divine Mind. In the individual Mahat becomes "Buddhi", the power of intelligence whereby we can discern truth from falsehood.

3. AHANKARA/ Ego

All manifestation is process of differentiation. Hence creation works through various separate entities or individual identities which are the basis for the ego.

"Ahankara" means literally "the I-fabrication" as the ego is a process, not an intrinsic reality. It is a series of divisive thoughts but not a real separate entity that exists in itself. It is a necessary power of division inherent in nature, a stage in evolution, but does not represent the underlying truth or identity of creatures. Through it the basic energies latent in Matter (Prakriti) and the fundamental laws contained in Cosmic Intelligence (Mahat) are able to take specific forms. Under the point focus of the ego the basic qualities of Nature are able to diversify as the three groups of five listed below; the senses, organs of action and the five elements.

4. MANAS/ Conditioned Mind

All manifestation works through various individual or conditioned mentalities or consciousnesses. Ego automatically projects mind. Even the atom has a mind. There must be an underlying mind to allow for coordination of activity and energy even at an inorganic level.

"Manas" means the formulating principle (from the root "man", to form) and is the principle of emotion and imagination. It connects us to the outer world through the senses.

5-9. THE FIVE TANMATRAS 5 ORIGIN of SENSES & ELEMENTAL POTENTIALS

These are the root energies of sound, touch, sight, taste and smell. Such prime energies are necessary to allow for the coordination of the sense organs with the sense objects. They are emitted on a subtle level by all things in the world.

The Tanmatras are named after their sensory qualities:

Gandha Tanmatra, the tanmatra of smell
Rasa Tanmatra, the tanmatra of taste
Rupa tanmatra, the tanmatra of sight
Sparsha tanmatra, the tanmatra of touch
Shabda Tanmatra, the tanmatra of sound.

"Tanmatra" itself means "primal measure" (tat-matra). Yet we should not confuse them with these sensory potentials, they are much more subtle than that. They are the root of all the sensory and elemental potentials.

The Tanmatras show the basic fivefold structure of the cosmos. There cannot be a sixth sense organ or sixth element because there is no Tanmatra to allow for its manifestation.

5 ORGANS of RECEPTION

10-14. THE FIVE SENSE ORGANS (Pancha Jnanendriyani)

These are the potentials for mental experience of the outer world and are latent in all mentalities. They become differentiated and sensitized through the process of evolution.

In human beings they are the ears, the sense organ of sound, for the element of ether; the skin, the organ of touch for air; the eyes, the organ of sight for fire; the tongue, the organ of taste for water; and the nose, the organ of smell for earth.

Subtle or inner forms of these organs also exist beyond the limitations of the physical body and their action gives extrasensory perception (E.S.P.).

The sense organs or organs of knowledge are receptive only, not expressive. Their activity is through the corresponding organs of action.

1. ears — sound for ether
2. skin — touch for air
3. eyes — sight for fire
4. tongue — taste for water
5. nose — smell for earth

anus	(elimination)	earth	(smell)
penis	(emission)	water	(taste)
feet	(motion)	fire	(sight)
hands	(grasping)	air	(touch)
mouth	(expression)	ether	(sound)

15-19. THE FIVE ORGANS OF ACTION (Pancha Karmendriyani)

These are the five organs of action that correspond to the five sense organs and five elements. In human beings they are the anus (elimination), earth and smell; the penis (emission), water and taste; the feet (motion), fire and sight; the hands (grasping), air and touch; and the mouth (expression), ether and sound.

In this way the five organs of action are essentially the manifestation of ideas, like motion, grasping etc. The physical organs are just structures to allow for these ideas of action to occur. The body is a vehicle with a specific design to allow for certain actions to be accomplished, to allow for the mind to gain experience.

These potentials for action are found everywhere in nature and manifest in many different ways. Our physical differentiation of them is only one way. Subtle or inner forms of these organs also exist allowing for direct action with the mind and psychic powers like telekinesis (action by thought or at a distance).

The organs of action are expressive only, not receptive. Their capacity for reception is through the sense organs.

20-24. THE FIVE GREAT ELEMENTS (Pancha Mahabhutani)

These are earth, water, fire, air and ether, which represent the solid, liquid, radiant, gaseous and etheric forms of matter that make up the outer world of experience, including the physical body. The sense organs and organs of action work upon them in receptive and active roles respectively.

These elements work on both gross and subtle levels and it only their gross forms that we experience in physical matter. They are principles of density that apply to all manifest mediums, including the mind. Earth, on one hand, is a completely dense medium that allows no action. Ether, on the other hand, is a completely subtle or receptive medium that allows complete freedom of action. Between these two polarities are all possible densities affording the complete range of experience and the manifestation of all ideas.

The science of the five elements is probably the most important factor in Ayurveda and all other forms of ancient science like astrology and alchemy. It should be learned carefully and contemplated regularly.

Hence the elements themselves are also manifestations of ideas. They are different densities or fields of expression for different ideas:

Earth - form
water - life
fire - light
air - time
ether - space

EARTH manifests the idea of solidity or stability, giving resistance in action.
WATER manifests the idea of liquidity or flowing motion, allowing for life.
FIRE manifests the idea of light, allowing for perception and for movement from place to place.
AIR manifests the idea of subtle movement, manifesting ideas of direction, velocity and change and giving the basis for thought.
ETHER manifests the idea of connection allowing for interchange between all material mediums, communication and self-expression.

Or, to put it in another way, ether manifests the idea of space, air that of time, fire that of light, water that of life and earth that of form. Like the different lines and colors of an artist, these are the different mediums necessary for the creative Cosmic Intelligence to express itself.

ORIGINATION OF THE ELEMENTS

MINDS' 5 OUTER MANIFESTATION

Ether is the original element. It derives from Mind and is its outer manifestation. Through movement it becomes air, which is nothing but the idea of motion inherent in the idea of space.

Air through repeated movement creates friction that becomes fire, which manifests the idea of illumination inherent in the idea of movement.

Fire through densification becomes water, which manifests the idea of life inherent in the idea of illumination.

Water as it coagulates becomes earth, which manifests the idea of form inherent in the idea of life.

★ Hence all the five elements are different densifications of one great element which is ether and one great idea which is space or location.

Similarly, all the elements are derivations from the same basic etheric substance. They are latent in it like butter in milk.

One-tenth of ether becomes air. One-tenth of air becomes fire. One-tenth of fire becomes water. One-tenth of water becomes earth.

In this way earth contains all five elements; water contains four elements (all but earth); fire contains three (including air and ether); and air two (with ether).

The five elements are thus nothing but reduplicated ether. Modern science has confirmed this ancient insight in its discovery that atoms are composed mainly of empty space and that solid form is really an illusion, in fact is only an energy field.

Earth = water, fire, air + ether + earth
Water = water, free, air + ether
Fire = fire, air + ether
Air = Air + ether
Ether = Ether

SUBTLE AND CAUSAL FORMS OF THE ELEMENTS/ The Tanmatras

The gross elements are derived from the subtle elements by a process of reduplication. Each gross element contains all five of the subtle elements, plus itself as a gross element. Hence gross or physical ether contains all five subtle or astral elements, ether, air, fire, water and earth on a subtle level.

Behind the subtle forms of the five elements are their causal or seed forms. These are the tanmatras. Hence the subtle element of ether also contains all five tanmatras.

The five tanmatras are not only the causal form of the elements, they are also the causal or seed forms of the senses. Hence the tanmatras are sometimes referred to under the five elements in their original state or the five prime cosmic forces.

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Thus through the logic of the Sankhya system we see that the entire universe is a manifestation of intelligence that gradually encases itself in matter, to explore all the different ideas of action and experience inherent within itself. All possibilities of life and experience thus must be experienced by some being at some time or place or another. As our mind evolves we become capable of greater and wider experience and can go beyond the boundaries of our body to a more direct and comprehensive experience through the mind, until we can eventually understand the entire universe within ourselves. This is the practice of Yoga that allows to transcend all the world.

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PURUSHA/ PURE CONSCIOUSNESS

In this Sankhya system the universe exists to provide experience for consciousness. The universe is purely an observable phenomenon that cannot exist for its own sake but only for that of its perceiver. That is why the world is based on intelligence, works through ego and mind and follows a pattern of organic law and intelligent structure. The consciousness it exists to allow experience for is listed as a twenty-fifth principle but it really transcends the twenty-four principles and is their foundation.

It is called the "Purusha", or indwelling being, or the "Atman", the inner or higher Self. It is distinct from the ego, or the "I am the body idea," which in Sankhya is ahankara.

The Purusha is not part of creation and is not composed of any form of matter, gross, subtle or mental. He is the substratum or conscious ground of the creation which shines by his reflected light. It is his light reflected through the mind which allows for perception to occur.

Prakriti (Primal Matter) in itself is insentient (that is, not conscious in itself), devoid of subjectivity, a mere latent objectivity without the reflected light of the Purusha. Even Mahat, cosmic intelligence, is not conscious in itself. According to the analogy the consciousness of Mahat and that of the mind which derives from it is like the heat emitted by a heated ball of iron. It glows but has no real fire of its own.

In this view of Sankhya and Yoga, the mind itself is seen as something material; that is, it is observable as an object and not the true source of consciousness. Our emotions and thoughts, being objects of perception, are part of the material world, as is the ego.

Prakriti and her manifestation exists to provide experience for the Purusha so that he can gain mastery over her and come to an understanding of his true nature. She is like a mother who selflessly provides for her child and gives him challenges to help him grow.

This duality of Purusha and Prakriti is much like the duality of Spirit and Matter found in classical Greek and Western thought, which some have considered was originally based on the Sankhya system.

KNOWLEDGE OF THE PURUSHA OR PURE SPIRIT

Relative to the Purusha, who is the sole seer or state of seeing and the only true conscious entity, the entire creation is the seen, something observed or objective in nature. As we evolve we learn to discriminate between the seer and the seen, between subject and object and cease to identify ourselves with the forms and functions of the external world.

In our normal and limited consciousness we identify ourselves with things like the body or emotional states as "I am this", "this is mine", "I am happy", "I am sad.". In this process of thought we superimpose various qualities on consciousness that transcends qualities. All these are limited notions based upon a confusion between the seer and the seen. They place under the influence of the external world and cause us to suffer by its changes. When the body dies we feel that we die.

Consciousness is not anything material or observable, what is so is matter, Prakriti. Knowing this we become free from all sorrow and all disturbance from the outer world.

Hence as we evolve we gradually learn to detach our consciousness from the external world. First we learn to detach ourselves from physical matter, then from emotions, thoughts and the ego itself, which are forms of subtle matter. When we no longer identify with our thoughts and gain objective perception of the entire realm of Prakriti, we return to our nature as the Purusha or pure consciousness. This is Self-realization or liberation.

Ayurveda also aims at bringing us back to the knowledge of the Spirit or Purusha. From its view health is part of right action which arises when we learn to observe things as they are and employ them according to their own potentials. This knowledge of the inner Self is the basis of Ayurvedic psychology, which will be discussed more later in the course.

Even the physical side of Ayurveda teaches us that we are not the body, that the body is a tool or vehicle for the expression of consciousness. In this way we cease to indulge in the body and give it the objective care it requires for health. We treat it like a vehicle or like a plant in the garden but not as a means of self-gratification, which is destructive both to the body and to our inner purpose in life.

Apart from that inner Self or higher nature all things are a deviation (vikriti), disturbance or disease. Until we learn to rest in our true nature we are prone to all the processes of decay and degeneration inherent in the external world. Hence the only final cure for disease is Self-knowledge.

ORDER OF COSMIC PRINCIPLES

The cosmos is divided into four parts:

1) Purusha or pure Spirit who is eternal, conscious, inactive and outside of creation. He is beyond cause and effect. He is the seer or state of seeing in which is truth, reality and bliss.

2) Prakriti or primal Nature who is eternal, insentient, active and the source of creation. She is the manifestation of the creative power of the Purusha, his consort or Shakti, through which he can observe the creative potentials inherent within himself. Prakriti cannot be seen. Her existence can only be inferred as the foundation for the observable. She causes things but is herself not the effect of anything. Prakriti is the material cause of the universe, as is clay the basis of an earthen pot.

3) Mahat, cosmic intelligence, Ahankara, ego, and the five Tanmatras or sensory potentials; a group of seven. They are both causes and effects. The are effects of Prakriti and produce the mind, organs and elements.

4) Vikriti, the transient and differentiated products of creation, which arise through ego, Ahankara. These are sixteen as the mind, the five organs of sense and action and the five elements. They are effects but not the cause of anything.

Hence bondage to cause and effect, which is time, arises through the ego, through which differentiation proceeds. The ego is the knot in creation, resolving which we gain mastery over it. It is the cause of both physical disease and psychological sorrow.

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PART I. LESSON 3

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What are the twenty-four cosmic principles (tattwas) of the Sankhya system used in Ayurveda?
2. What are the five Tanmatras?
3. Why are the five elements so important in Ayurvedic thought?
4. What is the Purusha?
5. How is the universe a manifestation of ideas?
6. How would you summarize the Ayurvedic view of creation?
7. Why is ego, ahankara, so central to the process of division and disease?

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PART I. LESSON 4

THE BACKGROUND OF AYURVEDA 3.
THE THREE GUNAS

Prakriti, Primal Nature, is composed of three prime qualities or "gunas" (which mean literally "what binds."). These are Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. They are more subtle than the five elements, which arise though their activity. They also precede the Tanmatras. They adhere in Prakriti herself and are her potentials for diversification.

All objects in the world are different combinations of the three gunas. Hence the three gunas give us the key to all forms and processes in life. The science of the three gunas, like the science of the five elements, is one of the pillars of Ayurvedic and Vedic science and so should also be carefully learned.

[redacted]

Sattva means the quality of stability, harmony, virtue or being (sat). It is said to be light (laghu) in nature (and luminous (prakashika). It has inward and upward motion and brings about the awakening and development of the soul. Sattva gives happiness. It is the principle of [redacted]

RAJAS

Rajas means the quality of distraction, turbulence or activity. It is said to be mobile (chala) and motivated (upashtambhaka). It possesses outward motion and causes self-motivated or self-seeking action that leads to disintegration. Rajas creates pain and suffering. It is the principle of [redacted]

TAMAS

Tamas means the quality of dullness, darkness and inertia. It is said to be heavy (guru) and veiling or obstructing (varana). It has downward motion and causes decay, degeneration and death. Tamas causes delusion. It is the principle of materiality.

When the three gunas are in balance Prakriti returns to the unmanifest state in which all her potentials can be cognized at once. The creation is withdrawn. When out of balance the three gunas bring about the process of cosmic evolution.

When the 3 gunas are balanced
Prakriti returns to unmanifest state (Purusha))
= pure sattva

This balance of the three gunas is called "pure Sattva" (shuddha sattva). Hence it occurs through preponderance and refinement of Sattva.

From Tamas comes the power of ignorance which veils our true nature. From Rajas comes the power of imagination that projects the world and puts us in bondage to the multiplicity of the external. From Sattva comes the clarity or peace through which we can perceive the truth.

MODIFICATIONS OF THE GUNAS IN COSMIC EVOLUTION

The three gunas working through ego (ahankara) on the five Tanmatras or sensory potentials produce the three groups of five.

> From Sattva the Tanmatras are modified into the five sense organs.
> From Rajas comes their modification into the five organs of action.
> From Tamas comes their modification into the five elements.

The five vital breaths (pranas) are also a manifestation of Rajas or energy in a more general sense. They allow for the coordination of the five sense organs and five organs of action. They provide for the transference of sensory information into capacity for action.

ORIGIN OF THE BIOLOGICAL HUMORS 3 humors arise through Rajas

The three biological humors (Vata, Pitta and Kapha) also arise primarily through Rajas, as they are kinds of mobile or vital energies. Vata, the biological air humor, is the same as the Pranas. Pitta, the biological fire humor, and Kapha, the water humor, also have five forms. The humors provide a physiological structure for the interplay of the organs and elements. This becomes the physical body.

The forms of [redacted] (the biological fire humor) evolve from Vata or Prana (the biological air humor) as relating more to the sense organs (as fire affords perception). Hence Pitta has some sattvic properties. The forms of Kapha (the biological water humor) evolve from Prana as relating to the five elements (as they serve to give bulk to the body) and so Kapha has some tamasic properties. (See also the sections on the Three Humors and the Five Forms of Vata, Pitta and Kapha).

Vata = air (prana)
Pitta = fire humor
Kapha = water humor

THE THREE GUNAS AND THE FIVE ELEMENTS

Under the predominance of Tamas, the five elements evolve with diversification according to the three gunas.

Ether comes from Sattva (clarity), fire from Rajas (energy) and earth from Tamas (inertia). Air is composed of both Sattva and Rajas (lightness and movement). Water has both Rajas and Tamas (movement and inertia). Earth is pure Tamas (inertia or resistance).

THE THREE GUNAS AND THE MIND

Though all the different gunas have their appropriate place in nature, like Tamas (inertia) in the mineral kingdom or Rajas (aggression) in the animal kingdom, they become factors of disharmony in the mind. It is mainly on the mental level that they are used in Ayurveda.

The mind appropriately is the domain of Sattva (clarity) and the mind itself is called Sattva. Ones quality of Sattva is reflected in the clarity of one's perception and one's peace of mind.

When in balance in the mind the three gunas give perception of truth, when out of balance, they create ignorance (tamas) and desire or false imagination (rajas), through which perception is blocked or distorted.

Sattva is the balance of Rajas and Tamas. Hence by increasing Sattva in the mind one returns to peace and harmony and can merge back into Nature and Spirit. Yet attachment to Sattva, like clinging to virtue, can also bind the mind. Hence pure Sattva is required, which is the detached form of it. Ayurveda uses the three gunas for determining mental nature (see lesson). *

THE GUNAS AND DISEASE

Rajas and Tamas are factors that cause disease, not Sattva, whose affect is harmonizing. Rajas causes dissipation of energy and Tamas brings about decay and death. Both usually work together. Rajas, as the principle of force, in its outward direction of energy causes loss of energy that culminates in Tamas, decay, just as excess stimulation leads to depression. In human life, for example, too much spicy food, alcohol, meat, sexual indulgence and excess activity are rajasic. They eventually lead to such conditions as fatigue and collapse of energy, which are tamasic. Hence health is maintained by Sattvic principles and Sattvic living.

Yet Rajas and Tamas can be useful in the healing process. Sattva does not always have the power to destroy either Rajas or Tamas. Though it does not cause disease, it is not always effective

in curing it. It is too harmonizing and tends to accept everything. Rajas (hyperactivity) can be neutralized by an equal amount of Tamas (hypoactivity). Tamas can be neutralized by an equal amount of Rajas. This applies particularly to acute or extraordinary conditions wherein the usual sattvic methods do not work. Hence Ayurveda does employ some rajasic and tamasic methods and substances as temporary measures, but not as constitutional remedies or life-style practices.

Ayurveda always aims at restoring balance, at the return to Nature as a means of returning to the Spirit. Its approach and methodology is thus primarily sattvic. It works through love, faith, peace, non-violence, non-interference and other sattvic virtues. Sattvic healing is through nature and the life force, like the use of herbs, vegetarian diet and yoga.

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THE PRINCIPLE OF CAUSATION: cause + effect

Ayurveda through the Sankhya system is firmly based upon the principle of causation. Nothing can exist without a cause. As is the cause, so will be the effect. This doctrine that from a real cause can only occur a real effect of like nature is called the principle of "Satkaryavada", the law of real effects. For example, from the qualities inherent in earth as the cause, a pot can be made as the effect. A pot cannot be made with water or air, as these do not have the inherent qualities or necessary causal basis. This means that there is a definite and understandable order to events in the universe.

KARMA

This doctrine of cause and effect is the basis of the law of Karma, the basic law of action in the universe. Whatever we do must produce an effect of like nature. From violence, for example, must come unhappiness, as violence in its own nature is essentially a state of distress. From non-violence must come peace, as non-violence is itself a state of peace.

This principle of causation is important in Ayurveda. Whatever is our condition there is a reason for it. A disease cannot arise without a cause of like nature. If one has a Kapha (phlegm) disease like the common cold, a Kapha cause must exist in such things as exposure to cold or damp, eating of damp or mucus forming foods, excessive sleeping and other Kapha increasing actions. Everything has a reason and if we discover that reason we can correct the chain of circumstances that brings us pain, disease or sorrow.
Nothing happens that is uncaused, unmerited or not produced by our own actions. This doctrine of causation means that we bring about

and are responsible for our own condition in life, physical and mental. It also means that we possess the power to correct it by remedial measures of opposite nature. As we have made all that we are, we can also unmake it.

Hence Ayurveda teaches us that though the causes of things may be complicated or may have come from the distant past, even from previous lives, they still exist and can be understood. Once understood we can correct them and prevent their negative effects from arising. There is an absolute justice in nature wherein we can only experience forces that we ourselves, individually and collectively, have previously set in motion. This doctrine of responsibility gives us the basis for correcting any wrong actions. It does not put us under the rule of any external fate or give credence to any self-pity or resignation but shows us that what we have spoiled we can also make good or even better in time. Hence it gives freedom in which we can arrive at self-mastery.

Ayurveda, therefore, is not a passive form of treatment. It does not give the patient a treatment or remedy and send them away. It insists that the patient themselves must take an active part in the treatment, for it is only the individual that can change their own chain of cause and effect. No one and nothing from the outside can do it, as our bondage to cause and effect is rooted in our dependency on the external.

Reversing this process of causation we can go back to the spiritual origin of things, all the way back through Nature to the inner Self, and cease to come under the affect of outer forces. This return process is the process of reintegration and unification that is Yoga.

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THE DISEASE PROCESS

Each of us also possesses a basic nature or constitution, Prakriti, in whose state of balance or equilibrium is health. Disease arises from a differentiation or degeneration from that basic state of health (Vikriti). Again, ego is the factor of division and decay, as on a cosmic level. It causes us to act in an artificial or perverted way and to deviate from the basic law of our nature, through the failure of wisdom it promotes.

Hence Ayurveda aims at restoring our basic nature (Prakriti) and allowing us to live in harmony with it. To do this we must first understand what it is. For that determination of constitution, physical and mental, is necessary, which is the foundation of Ayurveda.

In Ayurveda, therefore, the state of health is natural. We should all be naturally and spontaneously healthy and happy if we

merely live in harmony with our own nature. But we are so caught in a conditioned pattern of ego responses we confuse our desire nature, which really comes to us from the outside as various conditioned or artificial wants, with our original nature. We indulge ourselves and dissipate ourselves, rather than seek to know and understand ourselves.

Even treatments and medicines tend to be outside of our nature and may be a further imposition on it. For this reason Ayurveda tries to harmonize us with our nature as a primary treatment and uses outside modalities only in a supplementary way. We may be so obsessed with our disease that we cannot use our natural healing power, which alone can correct it.

Hence in treatment we must aim at what is natural, intrinsic and spontaneous. It is not in the complexity or clinical nature of treatment methods that the cure will arise. It is in a return to the simplicity and innocence of our deeper Self. Thus only on this spiritual background do we have the knowledge to use Ayurveda in its original and exalted way.

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THE FOUR GOALS OF LIFE

According to the Vedic system there are four legitimate goals of life: "Kama", "Artha", "Dharma" and "Moksha"; what could be translated as "enjoyment", "prosperity", "career" and "liberation". All creatures must be engaged in the pursuit of one or more of these.

KAMA

Kama, enjoyment is the most basic goal of life, as all beings want to be happy and avoid suffering. All beings should experience a natural joy in their organic functions. This includes the joy or beauty of sensory experience. This is the goal of the desire principle or emotional mind (Manas). The strongest form of pleasure is sexual enjoyment.

ARTHA

Artha, prosperity, sometimes called wealth, refers to the attainment of outer objects, and could be regarded as right possessions in life. We all need certain things like clothing, shelter and other external objects for proper functioning in life. This is the outer goal of the ego-principle (Ahankara).

DHARMA

Dharma, career or vocation, refers to the attainment of inner objects or status in life. We all need recognition for our particular gifts, skills or talents in life, so that we can fulfill our proper role in nature. This is the inner goal of the ego-principle.

MOKSHA

These three goals are considered to be outward or secondary in nature. The prime goal in life is considered to be liberation, Moksha.

Liberation is not just freedom from life, it is freedom for full expression in life. It depends upon knowledge. Hence it can also be called knowledge. Through knowledge, lower or higher, we gain more freedom and mastery of life and become capable of appropriate action on all levels. This is the goal of the intelligence or reason (Buddhi).

When the three lower goals are regarded as ends in themselves they cause various wrong actions in life and lead to physical and mental disease.

Pleasure, Kama, as the primary goal leads to self-indulgence and dissipation.

Wealth, Artha, as the main goal leads to greed and selfish accumulation.

Dharma, status, as the main goal leads to the pursuit of power and domination, even to violence.

arise from rajas

THE GOALS OF LIFE AND THE GUNAS

All three of these lesser goals arise from the quality of Rajas. In fact, all goal seeking is Rajasic in nature. It reflects a fundamental disturbance or lack of peace, a wanting to get somewhere or get something.

Below these three goals is a state of inertia wherein we do not seek anything in life but merely allow ourselves to drift according to external forces. This is a lower state of non-motivation or a Tamasic state of fear and passivity.

Above these three goals is the goal of liberation. Yet liberation is not just a goal, it is our true nature. It does not really have to be sought as something new or external. We can only come to it through a process of self-negation or surrender of the ego and its endless seeking of goals. It is the Sattvic goal that is the freedom from all goals or the state of peace that is the attainment of all goals.

Unfortunately our culture does not recognize this higher unmotivated state and confuses it with the lower. The yogi in peace is often regarded as no better than a bum hanging out in inertia. Hence we are unwilling to support those who wish to pursue the spiritual goals and not the material.

THE FOUR GOALS AND THE LEVELS OF SOCIETY

In the Vedic system, four different social statuses were recognized. These degenerated into the caste system that has become such an oppressive force in Indian culture. They were meant reflect

the values we really pursue in life and are not determined merely by birth (though this can be an important factor).

Just as artists all over the world by the basic values and actions of the artistic nature share the same basic type of life, so do our primary goals determine the basic level of society in which we function. Without changing these values we cannot get beyond the limitations of that level of society.

Those who pursue pleasure as the primary goal in life belong to the servile or labor class (Shudra), as they are dependent upon the external for their sense of happiness in life.

Those who pursue wealth as the primary goal belong to the business or commercial class (Vaishya).

Those who pursue status as the primary goal belong to the noble or political class (Kshatriya).

Those who pursue liberation or spiritual knowledge as the primary goal belong to the spiritual class (Brahmin), which, properly speaking, is beyond all prejudice of class and creed.

Those pursuing spiritual knowledge also have the capacity to achieve the three lower goals in a secondary way. Because of his clarity and detachment the man of spiritual temperament can usually do better in all the domains of life, including making money, but he will do this for a spiritual purpose not for personal aggrandizement. The pursuit of worldly knowledge, however, as the primary goal, like scientific knowledge as the measure of truth, usually makes us believe in some goal of pleasure, wealth or status as most significant.

Below all of these are those who pursue no positive goal in life. They were the basis for the outcasts.

In this way these four basic levels of society exist in all human cultures at all times. They reflect the basic goals inherent in human life. All potential human goals must fall in one or the other of these.

THE GOAL OF AYURVEDA

Ayurveda exists to provide the state of health or freedom from disease, Arogya, that is considered to be the necessary basis of all four goals of life. But Ayurveda also exists to show us how to use health as a basis for the true goal of life, which is liberation.

The true practitioner of Ayurveda, therefore, will not be motivated in life by the selfish pursuit of pleasure, wealth or fame. His goal will be to be a source of healing, knowledge and liberation for all. Ayurveda is based on spiritual values and can only be truly practiced if these are followed. As it mainly exists to provide knowledge, what we teach our patients is more important than what we do for them.

THE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF AYURVEDIC TREATMENT

Ayurveda is based upon the principle of the unity of all life. This is evident in the various connections between things that reveal the interdependence of all life. Ayurveda seeks to increase our state of health through developing those factors of similar nature to it (samanya) and reducing those factors of contrary or variant nature (vishesha).

This concept of connectedness is the basis of the principle of LIKE INCREASES LIKE. Factors of similar nature to health, like rest, good food or meditation will increase health. Those of variant nature like overwork, bad diet or worry, will detract from it. We must promote as many of the positive factors and reduce as many of the negative factors in order to arrive at the optimum. Without having done this we cannot expect our condition to improve.

This concept further develops into the idea that conditions are corrected by their opposite or OPPOSITES CURE EACH OTHER. A condition of excess heat in the body can only be corrected through the application of cold. Hence in Ayurveda we employ opposite qualities to balance conditions. First we ascertain the qualities that are in excess, like cold, dryness and disturbance in a Vata (air) disorder. Then we apply substances or actions which are opposite, like the use of a gentle warm oil massage in this case, to correct it.

This same principle holds true on a psychological level also. Hatred never comes to an end through hatred but only through love, its opposite. Hence in treating mental disturbances we must also seek balance, not try to find justification for any imbalanced state.

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PART I. LESSON 4

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What are the three gunas and their qualities?
2. How do the three gunas relate to the mind?
3. Why is the principle of cause and effect stressed in Ayurveda?
4. Why is the ego central to the disease process?
5. What are the four goals of life?

6. What is the goal of Ayurveda?
7. Why does Ayurveda stress natural forms of healing?
8. Why does Ayurveda treat conditions with their opposite?

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PART I. LESSON 5

AYURVEDIC ANATOMY AND PHYSIOLOGY 1.

Ayurveda has its own system of anatomy and physiology, reflecting its unique vision of life and health. While there is much that is useful to learn in modern anatomy and physiology (and we recommend our students to study these at least on a basic level), Ayurveda has its unique perspective on the human body. To learn or practice Ayurveda we must first learn this system. It teaches us the basic language of life-energy and its organic functioning in the body. Hence it is something beyond regular anatomy and physiology that works only on a physical and chemical level and does not recognize the life-force or the humors. This is the main part of this first section of the course and the basis for what follows.

Ayurvedic anatomy and physiology is in many respects similar to allopathic anatomy and physiology, outlining the organs, tissues and systems of the body. Like the Chinese it also shows meridian and energy systems. What is special about it is its science of the life-force and of the biological humors. These are its most characteristic factors.

I. THE BIOLOGICAL HUMORS

According to Ayurveda there are three primary life-forces in the body or three biological humors, called "Doshas" in Sanskrit. The science of the three humors is called "Tridosha". The humors are the primary forces and subtle substances and behind all physiological and psychological functions. They produce the body and also are the causative factors in the disease process.

(Ayurveda is essentially nothing but the science of the biological humors.) They are the most important principles in Ayurvedic thought and practice. We might say that they are the yin and yang of Ayurvedic medicine.

In a slightly different form, that of four humors, they are also the essence of older Western medicine to the time of the Greeks (and of Islamic medicine which derived from it). Humoral medicine dominated the western world until the seventeenth century and still is central to that of the middle east and India.

To learn Ayurveda one must understand and memorize their nature, attributes, location, functions, states of excess and deficiency and factors of derangement. Once we have done this Ayurveda becomes much more simple and easy to understand as all else in it derives from this.

THE BIOLOGICAL HUMORS OR DOSHAS

The Ayurvedic term for humor, "dosha", means what darkens, spoils or causes things to decay (from the Sanskrit root "dush", to spoil), as when out of balance the humors bring about disease. "Dosha" in its broader and non-medical sense also means "stain, fault and twilight or sunset." The biological humors have a positive value in the body also, as when in balance they serve to support all tissues and organic functions.

The biological humors of Vata, Pitta and Kapha correspond primarily to the elements of air, fire and water. As the active or mobile (rajasic side) of the five elements they determine life processes of growth and decay. They develop the biological potentials inherent in the elements. They serve as a basis for the workings of the sense organs and organs of action, which take form and function through them.

VATA, THE BIOLOGICAL AIR HUMOR wind

The biological air humor is called "Vata", which means "wind". In terms of its etymology, it means "that which moves things". It comes from the Sanskrit root "va", meaning to blow, to flow, to direct or command. It is the motivating force behind the other two humors, which are considered to be "lame", or incapable of movement without it.

Vata is the prime force of the nervous system. It governs our sensory and mental balance, our sensory and motor orientation, and gives mental adaptability and comprehension. It is the basic vital or life force (prana), deriving primarily from the breath which is the energizing force for the entire body.

PITTA, THE BIOLOGICAL FIRE HUMOR bile

The biological fire humor is called Pitta or "bile". Its etymological meaning is "that which digests things". It comes from the Sanskrit root "Tap", meaning to heat, cook or transform.

It is responsible for all chemical and metabolic transformations in the body. It also governs our mental digestion, our capacity to perceive reality and understand things as they are. It derives primarily from our power to digest food.

KAPHA, THE BIOLOGICAL WATER HUMOR: phlegm

The biological water humor is called "Kapha", which means "phlegm" and etymologically means "that which holds things together" and indicates the qualities of stickiness and adhesion.

It gives nourishment, provides substance and gives support and thereby makes up the bulk of our bodily tissues. It also provides our emotional support in life and governs such positive emotional traits as love, compassion, modesty, patience and forgiveness. It serves as a vehicle, container or substratum for the other two forces.

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY ELEMENTS OF THE HUMORS

Each of these humors exists in a second element that serves as the medium for its manifestation or acts as its container.

VATA: secondarily ether

Vata, air, is contained in ether, and so it is also said to be composed secondarily of ether. It resides in the empty spaces in the body, like the colon or the pores of the bones, and fills up the subtle channels of the nervous system. Space in the body is also represented by the mind. Vata is the life-force that moves in the mind.

PITTA secondarily water

Pitta, fire, exists in the body in water or oil, and so is said to contain an aspect of water. It exists mainly in an acid form, as fire cannot exist directly in the body without destroying it. Such fluids in the body are those of the digestive system and that of the blood.

KAPHA: secondarily earth

Kapha, water, exists in the medium of earth, which contains it, and so it is said to be composed of earth also. Our physical composition is mainly water and is contained within various boundaries of our skin and other tissue linings (earth). Pure earth, however, is a destructive factor as by its immobility it blocks organic functions. Only in solution in water is it a useful nutrient.

Hence the three humors are contained largely by earth and ether as the physical and mental boundaries of our vital energy.

QUALITIES OF THE HUMORS

Each humor has its primary qualities. According to Vagbhatta, one of the great Ayurvedic commentators,

> [redacted] is dry (ruksha), light (laghu), cold (shita), rough (khara), subtle (sukshma) and mobile or agitated (chala).

PITTA is a little oily (sasneha), is sharp or penetrating (tikshna), hot (ushna), light (laghu), unpleasant in odor (visram; a kind of sour or fleshy smell), mobile (sara; but not agitated) and liquid (drava).

KAPHA is wet (snigdha; unctuous or oily), cold (shita), heavy (guru), dull (manda; also meaning slow), sticky (slakshna; gelatinous), soft (mritsna) and firm (sthira; steady or stuck).

Ashtanga Hridaya I. 11-12

Vata (wind or air) is primarily dry, cold, light and mobile in attributes. We can see these in the drying, cooling, lightening and agitated properties of the wind.

Pitta (bile or fire) is primarily hot, moist and light, with mobile but flowing action. We can see this in the nature of blood or the acid secretions in the stomach and intestines.

Kapha (phlegm or water) is primarily cold, moist, heavy and slow. We can see this in the nature of phlegm or that of water confined in a limited area where it stagnates and congeals.

Each of the humors thus shares one major quality and is opposite in two others.

Both Vata and Pitta are LIGHT (subtle) in nature.
Both Vata and Kapha are COLD.
Both Pitta and Kapha are MOIST or damp.

Vata and Pitta share a light or subtle nature for providing perception and power of movement.

Vata and Kapha are both cooling in that they serve to restrain bodily heat. Vata tends to disperse it and Kapha to conserve it in the form of tissue.

Pitta and Kapha, by their common damp quality, both serve to supply body fluids. Pitta is their heating or energizing force, as in the blood and its circulation. Kapha is their nurturing force as in the plasma which contains the nutrients for the entire body.

It is by their attributes that we recognize the humors. An excess or deficiency of these qualities indicates a similar excess or deficiency of the humor. This in turn brings about various pathological changes in the body.

For example, too much dryness shows an excess of Vata and a deficiency of Kapha, as Vata (air) is dry in nature and Kapha (water) wet. This will tend to cause Vata pathological changes like constipation, dry skin or emaciation that indicate a decrease the Kapha tissues in the body, like the plasma or fat.

For more information on this subject see the following section on "THE TWENTY ATTRIBUTES."

ACTIONS OF THE HUMORS

VATA

The actions or functions of the humors, both on the body and mind, are described as follows:

> The root of the humors, tissues and waste materials of the body is Vata (air). In its natural state it sustains effort, exhalation, inhalation, movement and the discharge of impulses, the equilibrium of the tissues and the coordination of the senses.

Hence Vata (air) is the most important or primary of the three biological humors. It governs the other two and is responsible for all physiological processes and organic functions in general. It governs energy, the breath, the nervous and sensory systems and is responsible for homeostasis, the right balance of function in the tissues and organs. For this reason, disturbances in Vata tend to have more severe implications than those of the other two humors and often affect the mind as well as the entire body, through the nervous system that motivates the body.

PITTA

> Pitta (fire) governs digestion, heat, visual perception, hunger, thirst, lustre, complexion, understanding, intelligence, courage and softness of the body.

Pitta governs all aspects and levels of light and heat in the body and mind. It involves a combustion of materials that give forth warmth and color. While Vata governs mental power and coordination, the capacity for mental movement and adaptability, Pitta governs mental perception, judgement and discrimination, the penetrating nature of thought.

KAPHA

> Kapha (water) gives stability, lubrication, holding together of the joints and such qualities as patience.
> quotes Ashtanga Hridaya XI. 1-3

Kapha is the material substratum and support of the other two humors and also gives stability to body function. It serves as a conserving and restraining force on the other two humors and their active and consuming nature. Without it the other two humors will disperse and disintegrate our energy. It lubricates the mucus membranes and the joints and serves to cushion the entire body. It also gives emotional calm and endurance, and governs our capacity to feel and sympathize.

*SITES OF THE HUMORS

VATA* colon or large intestines

Each humor has its respective sites in the body.

> Vata (air) is located in the colon, thighs, hips, ears, bones and organ of touch. Its primary site is in the colon.

The colon is the site where gas (air) accumulates. The thighs and hips are the main site of musculo-skeletal movement in the body, which Vata is responsible for. The organs of hearing and touch are governed by Vata, as they correspond to the elements of ether and air that it rules. The bones are tissue belonging to Vata.

PITTA small intestines

> Pitta (fire) is located in the small intestine, stomach, sweat, the sebaceous glands, blood, lymph and the organ of vision. Its primary site is in the small intestine.

The small intestine is the main seat of the digestive fire, the stomach of the digestive acids which have a fiery nature. The sweat and sebaceous glands hold and produce heat. The blood and lymph also contain heat and color. The eyes are the sense organ that belongs to the element of fire.

KAPHA stomach

> Kapha (water) is located in the chest, throat, head, pancreas, sides, stomach, lymph, fat, nose and tongue. Its primary site is the stomach.
>
> quotes Ashtanga Hridaya XII. 1-3

The chest or lungs produces phlegm, as does the throat, head, sinuses and the nasal passages. The mouth and tongue produce saliva, another Kapha fluid. The tongue is the organ of taste, which sensory quality belongs to the water element. Fat tissue stores water. It is also contained in our sides that surround the abdominal cavity in form of the peritoneal fluid.

At their primary sites the humors accumulate giving rise to the disease process. These are Vata in the large intestine, Pitta in the small intestine, and Kapha in the stomach. Treating them at these locations by their respective methods we can cut the disease process off at the root. This we will discuss in detail when we examine the disease process according to Ayurveda and Ayurvedic treatment methods.

These locations are in terms of their derangements. Vata (air), when deranged, is produced from below, as gas from the colon. Pitta (fire), when deranged, is produced in the middle as bile and acids from the liver and small intestine. Kapha (water), when deranged, is produced above as phlegm in the lungs and stomach.

According to their normal function their location is different. Vata (air) as nervous and mental force is centered above in the brain above and moves through out the nervous system. Kapha as water is held below in the kidneys and reproductive system and gives us a foundation or energy reserve to rely upon. Pitta remains in the middle.

LOCATIONS OF THE FIVE ELEMENTS IN THE BODY

In this regard we can examine the places of the five elements in the body.

The earth element is located below from the anus to the feet. It governs the legs and the excretory system.

The water element governs the lower abdomen and the urino-genital system.

The fire element governs the upper abdomen, the digestive system, particularly the liver and small intestine.

The air element is located in the nasal passages and chest, governing the respiratory and circulatory systems.

Ether is located in the head governing the mind and senses, the nervous system. The senses, we should note, are the main spaces, or orifices in the body. The head is filled with holes as it were.

AGGRAVATED STATES OF THE HUMORS

The humors when aggravated become the causative factors in disease. Diseases are nothing but manifestations of aggravated humors.

VATA

When aggravated the humors give rise to various symptoms and various diseases.

> In excess, Vata (air) causes emaciation, debility, liking of warmth, tremors, distention and constipation, as well as insomnia, sensory disorientation, incoherent speech, dizziness, confusion and depression.

High Vata (high air) results in the life-force and the mind losing their connection with the body, resulting in decay and loss

of coordination. There is hyperactivity at the expense of the vital fluids and the physical body tends to waste away. The life force becomes disconnected from the body, which also causes some degree of mental dissociation. Mind and body separate causing the body to begin to decay. The primary symptom of this is various forms of pain and disorientation.

PITTA

> Pitta (fire or bile) in excess causes yellow color of stool, urine, eyes and skin, as well as hunger, thirst, burning sensation and difficulty sleeping.

High Pitta (high fire) results in the accumulation of internal heat or fever, along with inflammation. We literally begin to burn ourselves up. Various acids or bile accumulate in the tissues causing fermentation and infection. Bleeding and excessive discharges like sweat or urine often occur.

KAPHA

> Kapha (water or phlegm) causes depression of the digestive fire, nausea, lethargy, heaviness, white color, chills, looseness of the limbs, cough, difficult breathing and excessive sleeping.
> quotes Ashtanga Hridaya XI. 6-8

High Kapha (high water) results in the accumulation of weight and gravity in the body, which inhibits normal function and causes hypoactivity through excess tissue accumulation. We become caught in a force of inertia, heaviness, congestion and stagnation and gradually lose the power of movement.

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THE BIOLOGICAL HUMORS AND OTHER MEDICAL SYSTEMS

CHINESE MEDICINE

Kapha and Pitta are very much like the concepts of yin and yang in Chinese medicine. [redacted] are of the nature of water, are cold, moist, heavy and sinking. [redacted] are of the nature of fire as hot, light and ascending. [redacted] make up the body fluids and tissues. [redacted] are responsible for digestion and perception.

Vata (Prana) is a parallel concept with chi in Chinese medicine. Both refer to the breath and the vital force. Both are light, mobile, formless and govern energy. Just as chi is the root of yin and yang, so is Vata the root or basis of Kapha and Pitta. Both circulate in the channels and determine the nature of their flow.

Kapha - yin
Pitta - yang
Vata - chi

In this regard, read also my chapter in PLANETARY HERBOLOGY, on Ayurvedic and Chinese Medicine.

GREEK AND OLDER EUROPEAN MEDICINE

In the Greek and Islamic systems Kapha and Pitta parallel the phlegmatic and choleric humors, which also correspond to the elements of water and fire. Kapha is also called phlegm in Ayurveda. Pitta means bile and cholera means yellow bile. Phlegmatic diseases belong to Kapha, choleric disorders to Pitta.

Vata, particularly when deranged, corresponds to the melancholic humor (black bile). Both are cold and dry and produce dark discolorations in the body (for example, around the eyes) and are behind most chronic and debilitating diseases. They differ somewhat in that melancholic humor corresponds to the element of earth and has some Kapha attributes. The fourth humor, the sanguine, corresponds to air and blood and usually represents the more positive side of Vata as energy, balance and the power of health.

Hence we see that the concept of the biological humors in some form or another is the basis of all naturalistic form of medicine. The humors give us an energetic key to understand the vital forces of the body and their processes of balance and imbalance. Ayurveda gives us perhaps the clearest system as to their workings, particularly relative to the constitutional types, the different individual physical and psychological temperaments that arise from them.

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Kapha phlegmatic

Pitta choleric

Vata melancholic

air + blood sanguine

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PART I. LESSON 5

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What are the three biological humors (doshas)?
2. What is the nature and attributes of Vata?
3. What is the nature and attributes of Pitta?
4. What is the nature and attributes of Kapha?
5. What are the main sites of the three humors?

6. How does Vata manifest when aggravated?
7. How does Pitta manifest when aggravated?
8. How does Kapha manifest when aggravated?
9. How important are the three humors in Ayurvedic thought?

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PART I. LESSON 6

AYURVEDIC ANATOMY AND PHYSIOLOGY 2.
THE TWENTY ATTRIBUTES

From the three gunas or prime qualities of Nature (Prakriti) come the "Twenty main Attributes" (ten pairs of opposites). They are the positive and negative, the yin and yang of all forces in the universe. They are the basis for the properties of all objects in nature both material and mental.

1.	COLD/HOT	Shita/Ushna
2.	WET/DRY	Snigdha/Ruksha
3.	HEAVY/LIGHT	Guru/Laghu
4.	GROSS/SUBTLE	Sthula/Sukshma
5.	DENSE/FLOWING	Sandra/Drava
6.	STATIC/MOBILE	Sthira/Chala
7.	DULL/SHARP	Manda/Tikshna
8.	SOFT/HARD	Mridu/Kathina
9.	SMOOTH/ROUGH	Slakshna/Khara
10.	CLOUDY/CLEAR	Picchila/Vishada

Generally, the cold, wet, heavy, gross or yin qualities go together, as do the hot, dry, light, subtle or yang qualities. The former tend to descend and contract and serve to create the body. The latter ascend and expand and create vitality and mind. The former relate to Soma (water), the enjoyment principle, the latter to Agni (fire), the perceiving principle.

ANALYSIS OF THE TWENTY ATTRIBUTES

1. HOT relates to fire and to Pitta (bile) and is its primary attribute. Hot increases Pitta and decreases Kapha and Vata.
COLD decreases Pitta and increases Kapha and Vata. All the elements besides fire tend to be cold. Whereas the heavy elements, earth and water, restrain heat but can hold it; the light elements, air and ether, tend to disperse it.

2. WET relates to water and to Kapha (phlegm) and is its primary attribute. It increases Kapha and decreases Vata. It mildly increases Pitta.

DRY relates to air and to Vata (wind) and is its primary attribute. It increases Vata and decreases Kapha. It mildly decreases Pitta. All the elements besides water tend to be dry but earth is able to hold water. Fire, air and ether evaporate and disperse it, though ether itself is a kind of subtle fluid.

Wet is sometimes translated as "oily" or "unctuous", as dampness usually causes some form of thickening or densification within it. Dry is sometimes rendered as "ununctuous".

3. HEAVY relates to earth and water. It increases Kapha and decreases Vata (strongly) and Pitta (moderately).

LIGHT relates to fire, air and ether. It increases Vata (strongly), Pitta (moderately) and decreases Kapha.

4. GROSS relates to earth and water, much like heavy. It also increases Kapha and decreases Vata (strongly) and Pitta (moderately).

SUBTLE is like light and relates to fire, air and ether. It increases Vata (strongly) and Pitta (moderately) and decreases Kapha.

5. DENSE relates to earth and is its primary attribute. Water along with earth as in Kapha also tends towards densification. It increases Kapha and decreases Vata and Pitta.

FLOWING, sometimes rendered as "liquid", relates to water and fire, as it is only water in its warm state that is liquid (not ice). It increases Pitta and decreases Kapha (moderately) and Vata (strongly). Kapha must be liquified before it can be discharged from the body.

6. MOBILE or FAST relates to air in particular but also fire. It increases Vata (strongly) and Pitta (moderately) and decreases Kapha.

STATIC or SLOW relates to earth and also water. It increases Kapha and decreases Vata (strongly) and Pitta (moderately). Ether does not move but its does not slow things down either. Mobile also relates to "active" and static to "passive".

7. DULL or "resistant" relates to earth and water. It increases Kapha and decreases Vata (strongly) and Pitta (moderately).

SHARP or "penetrating" relates to fire, air and ether. Fire is the sharpest of substances. Sharp increases Pitta (strongly) and Vata (moderately) and decreases Kapha.

8. SOFT relates primarily to water. It increases Kapha (strongly) and Pitta (moderately) and decreases Vata (strongly).

HARD relates to air and earth (the constricting affect of the wind, which is responsible for bringing out the hardness inherent in earth). It increases Vata and decreases Pitta (mildly) and Kapha (strongly). Ether is also soft but in a very subtle way.

9. SMOOTH relates primarily to water also. It increases Kapha (strongly) and Pitta (mildly) and decreases Vata, just as soft.
ROUGH relates to air and earth. It increases Vata and decreases Pitta (mildly) and Kapha (strongly), just as hard. Ether is also smooth in a very subtle way.

10. CLEAR, LIGHT or "transparent" relates to fire, air and ether. It increases Vata (strongly) and Pitta (moderately) and decreases Kapha.
CLOUDY, DARK or "opaque" relates to water and earth. It increases Kapha and decreases Pitta and Vata.
Sometimes cloudy is also rendered as "sticky" or "slimy" and clear as "non-sticky". Kapha is sticky in its nature, Vata and Pitta non-sticky. Naturally Sanskrit words have their own different associations than English.

Other such qualities exist in nature but these are the most important. For example, HIGH and LOW also exist. Vata (wind) and Pitta (bile), and the elements fire, air and ether tend to ascend. They will be increased by being in a high place or high frame of mind, as in over stimulation or over excitement. High Vata, particularly, will manifest as vertigo, fear of falling.

Kapha (phlegm), water and earth, tend to descend. They will be increased by being in a low place, like a marsh land, or a low frame of mind, ie. depression.

Other important qualities are MASCULINE and FEMININE. [redacted] tends to be masculine or aggressive, [redacted] tends to be feminine or passive in nature. [redacted] neutral, neither male nor female, or of the nature of a child.

ATTRIBUTES OF THE BIOLOGICAL HUMORS

VATA-----cold, dry, light, subtle, mobile, sharp, hard, rough, clear
PITTA----hot, a little wet, light, subtle, flowing, mobile, sharp, soft, smooth, clear
KAPHA----cold, wet, heavy, gross, dense, static, dull, soft, smooth, cloudy

By their attributes we can recognize and differentiate the humors: For example, a condition of cold in the body may be Vata (air) or Kapha (water) as both tend towards cold but in different ways. If it is cold and dry, it is Vata. If it is cold and wet, it is Kapha.

These qualities exist to different degrees in the humors. Vata (wind) and Pitta (bile) are both light, subtle, mobile, sharp and

clear, but whereas Vata is strongly so, Pitta is only mildly so. Pitta has continuous motion like a flow. Vata has discontinuous motion like a series of jolts or shocks. Pitta moves, whereas Vata shakes.

Kapha (phlegm) and Pitta (bile) are both wet, liquid, soft and smooth, but whereas Kapha is strongly so, Pitta is only mildly so. Hence the qualities of Pitta save heat tend to be more of a moderate nature. Thus we must always discriminate between primary and secondary attributes or those which are possessed in strong or mild degrees.

Some of these qualities appear contradictory. How can Pitta be both soft and smooth as well as sharp? Its soft and smooth attributes come from its secondary water element. Its fire makes it sharp.

Ether also is soft and smooth, as it is a kind of subtle liquid (the ethereal or celestial ocean), but is additionally sharp or penetrating as it goes through everything.

ATTRIBUTES AND THE GUNAS

SATTVA---neither hot nor cold, neither wet nor dry, light, subtle, mobile, sharp, soft, smooth, clear
RAJAS-----hot, a little wet, slightly heavy, gross, mobile, sharp, hard, rough, cloudy
TAMAS-----cold, wet, heavy, gross, solid, static, dull, hard, rough, cloudy (dark)

The attributes arise from the gunas. Sattva is subtle, light and generally balanced in qualities. Rajas is imbalanced, agitated and aggressive. Tamas is heavy, gross and generally stagnant in nature.

The attributes of Tamas are the same as that of the earth element. Those of Rajas are close to fire yet one not burning cleanly but producing smoke. Those of Sattva resemble ether.

ATTRIBUTES OF THE ELEMENTS

EARTH----cold, dry, heavy, gross, solid, static, dull, hard, rough, cloudy (dark) dense
WATER----cold, wet, heavy, gross, liquid, static, dull, soft, smooth, cloudy
FIRE-----hot, dry, light, subtle, mobile, sharp, rough, hard, clear
AIR------cold, dry, light, subtle, mobile, sharp, rough, hard, clear
ETHER----cold, dry, light, subtle, liquid, mobile, sharp, soft smooth, clear

These qualities also exist to different degrees in the different elements. Earth is more gross, heavy, static, dull and cloudy (darker) than water. Air and ether are progressively more light, subtle and clear than fire. Air is more rough and hard than earth (it produces these qualities in earth). Water is more smooth and soft than ether, which is only slightly so.

The qualities of the elements also differ from the humors:

The qualities of Pitta (bile) and fire do not entirely correspond because Pitta also contains some water. However, both have the same primary attribute of heat.

The qualities of Vata (wind), however, are entirely those of air. It is not strongly affected by the slightly different qualities of ether, which composes a part of it.

The qualities of Kapha (phlegm), similarly, are entirely those of water. Its secondary element of earth does not affect it very much.

Yet we can find some conditions wherein the ether element is higher in Vata or the earth element is higher in Kapha, in which case these other attributes would be more pronounced and our treatment method would be slightly different.

By their qualities we see that earth is primarily Kapha but secondarily Vata. Water is entirely Kapha, though its attributes are shared by Pitta. Fire is primarily Pitta and secondarily Vata. Air is entirely Vata. Ether is primarily Vata and secondarily Kapha. Ether as the root of the other elements is the most balanced of them.

USE OF THE ATTRIBUTES

We can see the twenty attributes at work in all energies, objects and situations in life. Through them we can discern their long term affects.

The general rule, as already introduced, is that "[redacted]". Hence a cold, dry climate or a cold, dry emotional relationship will tend to aggravate Vata. An increase of like attributes is always the basic causative factor in any increase of the humors. Similarly, an application of opposite attributes, like heat in cold weather, will reduce any tendencies towards imbalance and disease.

Around us at all times are factors increasing and decreasing the twenty attributes. It is important that we use these to balance out the conditions we find.

TREATMENT ACCORDING TO THE ATTRIBUTES

The humors when aggravated present an increase of their attributes. Yet it is not always the same attribute that is primarily aggravated in diseases of a particular humor.

For example, when the cold property of Vata is more aggravated we can more safely use hot, dry spicy herbs like ginger or Trikatu. When the dry attribute is higher, such herbs would have to be used with more discretion as they would tend to aggravate the condition by their drying nature. Then more demulcent or oily herbs, like licorice or sesame oil, would be appropriate.

Hence by treating the humors by individual attributes we can provide a much more specific treatment than if we just treat them by their general nature. Some forms of Ayurvedic treatment, therefore, focus more on the attributes and depart somewhat from the general background of the humors.

We may also want to treat one attribute at a time, particularly if one is especially out of balance. If cold is the main complaint of a patient, we might want to focus on that and not consider the other Vata or Kapha attributes they may possess in their predominant humor.

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PART I. LESSON 6

STUDY EXERCISES

As each individual is a unique combination of the humors, we seldom find a person who has the entire range of attributes of any one humor in all the degrees normal to it. Hence we can also profile a person by their attributes.

As an experiment, list those which are prevalent in your nature and to what degree (strong or mild). Then you can see how close you are to a one humor type or to what degree the other humors are present in your nature. The percentages of the humors you possess will then be more obvious.

For example, in my case I tend to be slightly warm, a little dry, very light, subtle, mobile, sharp, mildly soft and smooth, and clear. This is like saying I am Vata 3, Pitta 3, Kapha 1 or a Pitta-Vata type, but it gives us more specific information than that.

THE IMPORTANT THING IS TO LEARN TO PERCEIVE THESE QUALITIES AT WORK IN LIFE AROUND YOU. This is one of the main ways of training the mind in the science of direct perception, through which alone we can really learn Ayurveda (the science of life).

Give a profile of the climate, environment, life situations, thoughts, emotions, foods etc. according to what you perceive as the attributes prevalent in them. Do this with different things at least once a day. You will see that this affords you much new understanding and insight. These attributes are the essence of the language of nature and through them you can open up a dialogue with the world around you that will reveal the truth of things.

Merely to look up the attributes of things in a book is not of great value and may lead to rigidity of thinking, as these qualities do not always remain the same and may vary according to circumstances. Learn to read the book of life yourself. The essence of Ayurveda is in learning this art of natural thinking. It is the development of a new faculty, not just adding more information or adaptability to the old. This faculty, however, requires daily practice to develop.

Profile the attributes not only in yourself, but also in your environment and where you work, the physical and psychological factors where you live and where you earn your livelihood. See how they correspond and what tendencies towards imbalance exist within them.

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PART I. LESSON 6

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What are the twenty attributes?
2. What are the main attributes of the humors?
3. What are the main attributes of the gunas?
4. What are the main attributes of the elements?
5. Why is this science of attributes so important in Ayurveda?

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PART I. LESSON 7

AYURVEDIC ANATOMY AND PHYSIOLOGY 3.
THE FIVE TYPES OF VATA, PITTA AND KAPHA

There are in total five forms each of Vata, Pitta and Kapha. They reside in different sites in the body and perform different functions. Through them we can treat the humors more specifically and understand their dysfunctions in a more particular manner. Of these the five forms of Vata or the five Pranas are the most important, as Prana as the life-force underlies all of our activities.

THE FIVE TYPES OF [redacted](Air or Wind)

The five types of Vata are called in Sanskrit "Prana", "Udana", "Samana", "Vyana" and "Apan[redacted]", for which there are no equivalent terms in English. They are formed by adding various suffixes to the root "an", which means to breathe or to energize. They are the most important of these groups of five, as Vata is the most important of the humors. They are also called "Vayu", which also means wind. They show the different kinds of movement of the life-force.

1. PRANA

Prana (pra-ana) means the forward or "primary air" or nervous force. The prefix "pra" means forward, towards or prior. Pervading the head and centered in the brain Prana moves downward to the chest and throat, governing inhalation and swallowing, as well as sneezing, spitting and belching.

On an inner level it governs the senses, mind, heart and consciousness and gives them energy, coordination and adaptability. It is our portion of the cosmic life energy and directs all the other Vatas in the body. It determines our inspiration or positive spirit in life and connects us with our inner Self or pure consciousness. (It should be noted that the term "Prana" is also used in a broader sense to indicate Vata in general, as all Vatas derive from it).

inward movement

Prana has mainly an inward movement. It serves to bring the external air and food inward. It also enables us to take in impressions, to receive sensory impulses. In the same way, it

allows us take in feelings and knowledge. It affords us receptivity to external sources of nourishment. These depend upon the opening of our mouths and the opening of the mind behind it.

Prana also gives us receptivity towards internal forms of nourishment, like our inner connection to the cosmic life-force. When Prana is sufficient no disease can affect us. Hence all diseases involve some impairment of Prana and can be treated by methods like Pranayama, breathing exercises, or aroma therapy, which strengthen it.

2. UDANA

Udana (ud-ana) means the "upward moving air" or nervous force. The prefix "ud" means upwards. It is located in the chest and centered in the throat and governs exhalation and speech, both of which occur through the outgoing breath. When impaired it causes cough, belching and vomiting.

On an inner level, Udana is responsible for memory, strength, will and effort. These also reflect how our energy tries to ascend in life. Generally speaking, it governs our self-expression in word, thought and effort.

Udana determines our aspiration in life. At death it rises up from the body and directs us towards various subtle worlds according to the power of our will and karma that move through it. When fully developed it gives us the power to transcend the outer world, and affords various psychic powers. The practice of yoga is involved primarily with developing Udana.

Udana has primarily upward movement. It brings the air up and out in exhalation. It also brings our energy up in our strivings in life. It causes our minds and spirits to ascend. It gives us higher values and deeper powers of discrimination.

3. SAMANA

Samana (sama-ana) means the "equalizing air". "Sama" means balancing as in our word the "same". It is centered in the small intestine and is the nervous force behind the digestive system. It governs the process of digestion and assimilation of nutrients. When impaired it causes lack of appetite or nervous indigestion.

balances ↓↑

Samana mainly has an equalizing or balancing action. It balances the higher and lower portions of the body and their respective energies. It balances the inner and the outer and the upper and lower parts of the body in the process of digestion. As it aids in assimilation and increase of energy it has some ascending action.

4. VYANA

Vyana (vi-ana) means the "diffusive or pervasive air". "Vi" is a prefix meaning "apart" or "to separate". It is centered in the heart and distributed through out the entire body. It governs the circulatory system and through it the movement of the joints and muscles (musculo-skeletal system) and the discharge of impulses and secretions.

As such its action is mainly in the legs, the main site of movement in the body. When impaired we suffer from lack of coordination and difficulty in movement, particularly walking.

Vyana has mainly outward action and allows us to move and express ourselves in action. It can overly diffuse or disperse our energy. It renders our consciousness more outwardly motivated. When excessive it causes lack of motor control. In this regard, it is opposite Prana which moves inward. As it causes a distribution and release of energy, it has some descending action.

5. APANA

Apana (apa-ana) means the "downward moving air" or the air that moves away (apa). It is centered in the colon and governs all downward moving impulses of elimination, urination, menstruation, parturition and sex. Its impairment manifests as difficulty or abnormality in these discharges, for example, both constipation and diarrhea.

It also governs the absorption of water, which occurs in the large intestine and gives us the power to take in full nourishment from our food, the final stage of digestion of which also occurs in the large intestine.

As Udana, the ascending air, carries our life force upwards and brings about the evolution or liberation of consciousness, Apana, the descending air, carries it down and brings about the devolution or limitation of consciousness. In excess it causes decay and death. It becomes like a drain of energy that allows our life-force to flow away and sink down into the earth.

Apana supports and controls all the other forms of Vata, as it rules the large intestine, Vata"s main site of accumulation. Derangements of Apana are the basis of most Vata disorders. As a downward moving force when aggravated it causes increase of waste materials and toxins. Hence the treatment of Apana is the first consideration in the treatment of Vata. This allows Prana and Udana and the other Vayus (Vatas) to return to their normal functioning by reducing the restraining action of Apana.

As Vata disorders are the basis of most diseases and as Vata dysfunctions always accompany those of the other two humors, we must

always consider normalizing Apana in the treatment of any disease. It is the descending force of decay that manifests whenever there is loss of strength or an accumulation of toxins. Apana is increased by their inertia and gravity, as it is of the same nature as a force of decay. Apana is the power of disease inherent in the body itself, our naturally tendency to decay as part of our connection to the earth.

We see, therefore, that there is one Prana or life-force in five forms according to its different powers and directions of movement.

We can imagine it like a cross with Prana in the center as the regulating factor. Udana, which rises, will be at the top, Apana, which sinks, at the bottom. Samana will be to the left moving from Apana to Udana balancing the two in an upward direction. Vyana will be to the right moving from Udana to Apana, balancing the two in a downward direction. We must learn to keep these five forces in proper balance.

MOVEMENT OF THE LIFE-FORCE

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        Udana                          Ascending
Samana---Prana---Vyana   Balancing---Central---Balancing
        Apana                          Descending
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Samana has an equalizing but centripetal force (moving towards the center) as the power of digestion. Vyana has an equalizing but centrifugal (moving away from the center) force as the power of movement.

In ancient texts, like the Upanishads, two primary forms of Prana are recognized, Prana and Apana, as inhalation and exhalation, with Samana in between as the balancing or metabolic factor. Udana develops as the positive side of exhalation, the capacity to extract energy the follows from inhalation. Vyana develops as our capacity to express energy, which usually follows exhalation.

Hence the five Pranas are different stages of the process of breathing. Prana, the primary air, is inhalation. Samana, the equalizing air, is retention or the point between inhalation and exhalation. Udana, the upward moving air, is the first part of exhalation. Apana, the downward moving air, is the second part of inhalation. Vyana, the outward moving air, is the retention or point between exhalation and inhalation.

Through breath control (pranayama) at these different points we can learn to regulate and strengthen the Pranas.

SUMMARY OF THE FIVE PRANAS

[redacted] governs the INTAKE of energy via food, breath, impressions, emotions, thoughts and consciousness. It resides in the head and moves inward and downwards allowing for the reception of all energy sources. The breath is the key action for Prana. ~~In breathing~~ we can not only take in energy from the air, we can also connect with subtler sources of energy through the consciousness. Conscious breathing feeds both energy and consciousness.

What brings about right function of Prana is right receptivity in life, openness to the Divine and the cosmic life.

Udana governs the OUTPUT of energy via our expression through speech, physical effort, emotional enthusiasm and mental judgement. It is responsible for our creative use of energy.

What brings about right function of Udana is right aspiration in life and right values.

Samana governs the ABSORPTION of energy via the digestive system. If our minds and emotions are not in balance (sama) then we will not be able to absorb nutrients on any level.

What brings about right function of Samana is peace and balance, harmony and equilibrium within ourselves and with our natural environment.

Vyana governs the DIFFUSION of energy via the circulatory system (physical body) but also through the breath, senses, emotions, thoughts and consciousness.

What brings about right function of Vyana is right action, action in harmony with our values and aspiration.

Apana governs the ELIMINATION of waste energy via all energy sources. These include sex, urination, defecation, exhalation. Apana is like a plug on the energy in the body. It can be opened to let waste energy out but if kept too open it will drain the Prana from the body altogether.

What brings about the right functioning of Apana is our ability to ward off negativity, to not respond to it. Apana in its right functioning wards off decay by eliminating the forces of decay from the body.

Hence we see that all five Vayus are more complex than their simple physical presentation. Besides their sites and actions in the physical body, they also have their actions on the subtler aspects of our being as the senses, breath, emotions, thought and consciousness. Each also has its activity on the skin as well (which relates to the senses and breath).

Keeping all five Vayus in balance and in proper functioning on all the levels of our being is the key to real health.

THE THREE MAIN PRANAS

Prana governs the RECEPTION of the life-force. It allows us to receive the life-force on different levels. It also provides the connection with the primary life-force or Spirit (Purusha) which enables us to vitalize all the energies we take into us.

Udana governs the ASCENT of the life-force, its positive (+) extraction on different levels. Our life-force naturally ascends, naturally promotes the evolution of consciousness. If we surrender to life, it takes us upwards and guides us towards and through transformation. What blocks this natural ascent of the life-force is its identification with the forces of descent, via thought and attachment to the external.

Apana governs the DESCENT of the life-force, its negative (-) extraction. This in its right functioning is the elimination of any negative life-energy. In its wrong functioning it is the opening up to forces of death and decay.

PRANA AND APANA

There are two forces in life, two currents of the life-force. There is a positive current towards growth and evolution of consciousness, a positive life-force. This is Udana. There is a negative current towards decay and involution of consciousness, a negative life-force. This is Apana.

(+) Udana is the soul or the individualized consciousness (jivatman). Prana is the Divine or universal consciousness (paramatman). Udana is the force whereby the soul rises in consciousness and rises to higher states of consciousness. It takes it upwards to higher worlds after death.

(-) Apana is the force whereby the soul descends in consciousness and falls into lower states of consciousness. It takes it downwards to lower worlds after death. Apana is the ego or process of selfishness.

What is necessary is to unite Udana with Prana. This is to unite our aspiration with the Divine source of life, light and love. To do this we must open ourselves to pure sources of Prana on all levels of our being; food, breath, senses and mind. We must unite ourselves with the ascending force in nature. This means that we must increase Sattva, as Sattva alone of the gunas has the power to ascend. Sattvic regimes increase Udana, further the powers of ascent by their luminosity and lightness. Rajasic and tamasic regimes increase Apana by their turbulence, darkness and heaviness.

Udana is the power of speech, which in its higher form is the power of mantra (mantra shakti). Hence the chanting of mantra increases Udana. Om itself is the sound of the liberating ascending life-force (Udana). Tapas, spiritual discipline, is to increase Udana. Surrender to God as the source of life increases Prana. These are the basis of the practice of yoga.

Some teachers encourage effort (purushartha) in spiritual practice. Others encourage surrender. Both should go together. Our effort should be based on the awakened life-force and aspiration. Our surrender should be to the Divine source of life. This is like the effort of the river to move towards the sea and surrender, merge in it.

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THE FIVE FORMS OF PITTA (Fire or Bile)

The five forms of Pitta are called "Sadhaka", "Alochaka", "Pachaka", "Bhrajaka" and "Ranjaka". They are sometimes referred to as "Agnis" or forms of fire, as they all serve to provide or promote heat on some level.

inward 1. SADHAKA PITTA

Sadhaka Pitta means the fire that determines what is truth or reality, from the root "sadh" meaning "to accomplish or to realize". It is located in the brain and heart and allows us to accomplish the goals of the intellect, intelligence or ego. On a lower level, these include worldly goals of pleasure, wealth and prestige and, on a higher level, the spiritual goal of liberation.

Sadhaka Pitta functions through the nervous system and senses. When impaired we suffer from lack of clarity, confusion or delusion and become unable to distinguish between our fantasies and reality.

Sadhaka Pitta governs our mental energy, mental digestion (the digestion of impressions, ideas or beliefs) and our power of discrimination. Its development is emphasized in Yoga, particularly the Yoga of Knowledge, where we are taught to discriminate between the eternal and the transient, the real and the apparent. Our intelligence (buddhi) functions through it.

Like Prana it has an inward movement. It governs inner combustion, the release of energy from our impressions and life-experiences to empower the mind. It directs our intelligence within.

2. ALOCHAKA PITTA

Alochaka Pitta means the fire that governs visual perception. It is located in the eyes and is responsible for the reception and digestion of light from the external world. Centered in the pupil of the eyes it allows us to see. When impaired we suffer from failure of vision or eye diseases.

Like Udana Vayu it has upward motion and causes us to seek light, clarity and understanding. Its reception of light helps feed

the mind and soul. The quality of the soul is always visible through the light of the eyes. Through it we can often read the condition of the liver in the body. Clearness in the eyes reflects a good digestive power and deeper intelligence (sattva).

3. PACHAKA PITTA

Pachaka Pitta means the form of Pitta (fire) that digests things (pachati). It is located in the small intestine and governs the power of digestion. From it comes the bile salts and acids that digest our food. In addition it governs the regulation of body temperature and helps maintain the power of circulation.

When impaired we suffer from indigestion, particularly hyperacidity and ulcers, when it is high. When it is low we have poor absorption and lack of body heat.

Pachaka Pitta is the basis and support of the other forms of Pitta, as Pitta's prime location is in the small intestine. It is the first consideration in the treatment of Pitta, as our primary source of heat is the digestive fire, Agni, with which this form of Pitta is intimately bound.

Like Samana it has mainly equalizing or balancing action and discriminates the nutrient from the non-nutrient part of food. It is responsible both for building up our tissue and for destroying any pathogens that have entered the body with the food.

4. BHRAJAKA PITTA

Bhrajaka Pitta means the fire that governs lustre or complexion. It is located in the skin and maintains complexion and color of skin. When aggravated, for example, it causes skin rashes or discolorations. It governs our digestion of warmth or heat and sunlight, which we absorb through the skin. Through it we can read the heat and warmth of the body generally, the glow of our aura.

Like Vyana Vayu it is involved in the process of circulation and has an outward moving energy. It is like the warmth of our peripheral circulation. Through it our heat can be diffused and dispersed.

5. RANJAKA PITTA

Ranjaka Pitta means the form of fire that imparts color. It is located in the liver, spleen, stomach and small intestine and gives color to the blood, bile and stool. It primarily resides in the blood and is involved in most liver disorders. It is like the warmth in the blood and the circulatory system.

Like Apana Vayu it has a downward moving energy. Accumulated Pitta through it colors the other secretions and waste materials of the body, particularly urine and feces.

THE FIVE FORMS OF KAPHA (Water or Phlegm)

The five forms of Kapha are "Tarpaka", "Bodhaka", "Kledaka", "Sleshaka" and "Avalambaka". They are regarded as different forms of phlegm.

1. TARPAKA KAPHA

Tarpaka Kapha means the form of water that gives contentment (tripti). It is located in the brain and heart, as the cerebro-spinal fluid. It gives strength, nourishment and lubrication to the nerves. Inwardly, it governs emotional calm and stability, happiness, as well as memory (the capacity to retain ideas). Its impairment manifests as discontent, malaise, nervousness and insomnia.

The practice of Yoga also increases this mental form of Kapha as contentment and bliss (Ananda). Like Prana it has an inward motion and allows us to feel happiness in our own nature. It orients us towards inner forms of joy. Meditation promotes its secretion wherein it becomes Soma or Amrit, the nectar of immortality.

2. BODHAKA KAPHA

Bodhaka Kapha means the form of water that gives perception. It is located in the mouth and tongue as the saliva that allows us to taste our food. Like Kledaka, it is also part of the first stage of digestion. Its impairment manifests as lack of taste or a deranged sense of taste, which often precedes Kapha disorders.

Like Udana it has upward moving action and gives us knowledge. Like Alochaka Pitta it resides in the head and affords perception. It governs our sense of taste in life and our refinement of taste as we seek more subtle forms of enjoyment as we evolve.

3. KLEDAKA KAPHA

Kledaka Kapha means the form of water that moistens. It is located in the stomach, as the alkaline secretions of the mucous lining and as the mucous lining of the digestive tract generally. It is responsible for the liquefaction of food and for the first stage of digestion. If food is not liquified properly the acids cannot work upon it in the right manner. Its impairment manifests as irregular secretion of stomach fluids and excess phlegm.

Like Samana it has a balancing action and mediates between the contents of the g.i. tract and our internal tissues, as well as regulating the moisture content in the digestive process.

4. SLESHAKA KAPHA

Sleshaka Kapha means the form of water that gives lubrication (from the root "slish" to be moist or sticky). It is located in the joints as the synovial fluid and is responsible for holding them together and affording ease of movement. Its impairment occurs in arthritic conditions.

Like Vyana Vayu it has outward going action and affords us strength and stability in outer movement. It can, however, breed attachment to action and in excess can cause looseness, heaviness and difficulty in movement.

5. AVALAMBAKA KAPHA

Avalambaka Kapha means the form of water that gives support. It is located in the heart and lungs and gives lubrication to the chest. It is the storehouse of Kapha (phlegm) and upon it depend the actions of the other Kaphas in the body.

It is not simply the phlegm produced by the lungs, as that is an excess of Kapha generally. It is corresponds to the basic plasma (rasa) of the body as its primary watery constituent, which is distributed by lung and heart action, from which all Kapha is produced as a by product.

Like Apana it has downward action and gives support but can also render us heavy and attached. Most forms of emotional clinging cause it to increase and it causes overweight and most pulmonary disorders.

Avalambaka is the main form of Kapha in the treatment of disease. Its dysfunction is behind most accumulations of phlegm in the body. Clearing the chest of phlegm is the basis for removing phlegm from all the body. Even water retention (edema) is often better treated through dispelling phlegm in the chest rather than simply promoting urination.

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THE FIVE FORMS OF THE HUMORS AND THE FIVE ELEMENTS

Each of these five forms corresponds additionally to one of the five elements. This does not mean that they are composed of this element but that they aid in its function in the body.

ETHER----PRANA VAYU(VATA)	SADHAK PITTA	TARPAK KAPHA
AIR------UDANA VAYU	ALOCHAK PITTA	BODHAK KAPHA
FIRE-----SAMANA VAYU	PACHAK PITTA	KLEDAK KAPHA
WATER----VYANA VAYU	BHRAJAK PITTA	SLESHAK KAPHA
EARTH----APANA VAYU	RANJAK PITTA	AVALAMBAK KAPHA

Those which correspond to the element of ether are the most subtle, the most inward in functioning, reside in the head and heart and have a controlling action on the other forms of the same humor.

Those which correspond to the element of air have upward motion, give perception, increase will and aspiration and help raise the functioning of the other forms of the same humor.

Those that correspond to the element of fire aid in the digestive process.

Those that correspond to water have an outgoing and diffusive action and aid in the distribution of the forces of the humor.

Those that correspond to earth have a downward movement and increase weight and gravity in the body. On a positive side, they give stability and support to the other forms of the humor.

Generally, we should try to increase the power of the subtler forms of the humors and decrease that of their grosser forms. Their mental or etheric forms, above all, are to be exercised and nourished, as they serve to regulate and harmonize the rest.

Prana is increased by the practice of Pranayama and the creation of a positive attitude and positive will in life. Sadhak Pitta is increased by the practice of discrimination and by clarity of perception. Tarpak Kapha is increased by the practice of contentment and by faith in life.

Apana Vayu is decreased by giving up negative attitudes, particularly about oneself and by giving up our attachment to negative emotions like self-pity. Ranjak Pitta is decreased by releasing negative emotions like anger, envy and hatred. Avalambak Kapha is decreased by giving up of attachment and craving for security and possessions.

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THE FIVE MINOR PRANAS minor prana = Naga, Kurma, Krichara, Devadatta + Dhananjaya

Prana is fivefold as major and minor (Mahavayu and Upavayu). The five minor Pranas are Naga, Kurma, Krichara, Devadatta and Dhananjaya. Naga is said to be the most important of these and is their leader. These are not as important as the major Pranas and it is enough to know of them generally.

earth, smell **DEVADATTA** is located in the nostrils and the mouth. It relates to the sense of smell and the earth element. It governs yawning and sneezing.

water, taste **KRICHARA** (also called krikal) is located in the throat. It relates to the element of water and the sense of taste and governs hunger, thirst and digestion.

fire, sight **KURMA** is located in the eyelids. It relates to the sense of sight and the element of fire. It governs the opening and closing of the eyes, including winking and blinking.

air, touch **NAGA** is seated in the mouth. It relates to the element of air and the sense of touch. It causes belching and hiccup. Some consider helpful in awakening the Kundalini.

earth, sound DHANANJAYA pervades the entire body. It relates to earth and sound. It causes swelling, including abdominal distention. After death it is responsible for the swelling up of the body. It aids in bodily movements and helps provide for the absorption of nourishment.

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HIGHER FORMS OF THE FIVE PRANAS

The five Pranas also exist in both the subtle (astral) and causal bodies. Please examine our sections on Yoga and Ayurvedic psychology for more information on these subtler encasements of the soul. The five Pranas pervade the entire universe and are the basis of its manifestation. In their higher forms they aid in spiritual knowledge.

Prana gives power and preeminence, independence and transcendence to the spirit. Udana gives the capacity to ascent. Samana gives peace, balance and equanimity. Vyana gives pervasiveness and infinity. Apana allows us to ward off negativity.

In terms of their subtle function Apana relates to earth. It gives support. Samana relates to water. It aids in the production of secretions. Prana relates to fire. It gives light and warmth. Udana relates to air. It keeps the body and the organs lifted up. Vyana relates to ether. It increases circulation and allows for the pervasion of consciousness.

Prana - fire light + warmth
Udana - air keeps body + organs lifted up
Samana - water production of secretions
Vyana - ether increases circulation
Apana - earth support

*****

THE MENTAL FORMS OF THE HUMORS
PRANA, TEJAS AND OJAS

There are subtler forms of the three humors than their five forms in the physical body. These are their three forms in the mind. They are the essence of their three forms in the brain and they fulfill similar functions but on a more subtle level.

The mental form of Vata is also called PRANA (though its meaning here is slightly different than above).

The mental form of Pitta is called TEJAS (from the root "tij" meaning to give heat). Tejas is the fire of the mind.

The mental form of Kapha is called OJAS (see also section on Ojas). Ojas is the essential vital fluid of the body in subtle form in the mind.

These three forms function through the third eye or sixth chakra and regulate our mental nature. They also control Vata, Pitta and Kapha in the body.

Prana gives mental adaptability, capacity to communicate, coordination of ideas and breadth of comprehension. It provides the will to live, to grow and to get well. It is the basic life force or vitality of the mind.

Tejas gives intelligence, reason, passion to learn or discover, zeal, power of self-discipline and the capacity to perceive. It is the basic clarity of mind.

Ojas gives mental strength, contentment, patience, fortitude, calm and the capacity for good memory and sustained concentration. It is our basic mental and psychological stability and endurance in life. Ojas is essentially our peace of mind.

DERANGEMENTS OF PRANA, TEJAS AND OJAS

EXCESS CONDITIONS

When in excess Prana causes loss of mental control and loss of sensory and motor coordination. We feel spaced out, ungrounded and feel like we are losing our minds or sense of identity. Anxiety and palpitations may occur, along with insomnia. The life-force loses its connection with the brain and body and various incoherent behavior can happen.

In excess Tejas causes an overly critical and discriminating mind, with possible delirium, headache and burning sensation in the head and eyes. We overly digest our impressions and negate our experience in life. Nothing can satisfy us and we can find nothing that is true (save perhaps our own negativity). Excess doubt, anger, irritability and enmity are possible.

Too much Ojas causes heaviness and dullness in the mind, as well as too much feeling of self-content that causes us to be unwilling to change or grow.

Generally, high Ojas is much less a problem than high Prana and Tejas. They are the main factor in mental disorders. High Prana (excess air) dries out Ojas and high Tejas (excess fire) burns it up. Excess states of Prana and Tejas thus tend to go together along with low Ojas. Ojas is the factor of balance and stability in both body and mind.

DEFICIENT CONDITIONS

When Prana is too low we lack in mental energy, enthusiasm and curiosity. Our life-force and healing energy is low and we allow no new energy into our lives. Our mind and senses become dull, heavy and without motivation. Our attitudes will be conservative, rigid and we will be under the rule of the past.

When Tejas is too low we lack in capacity to inquire or discern. We uncritically accept things and lose the power to learn from or digest our experiences. Mentally we become too passive and impressionable and often come under the domination or influence of others. We will lack in purpose or have no real goal in life.

When Ojas is too low we lack in self-confidence, are unable to concentrate, have poor memory and lack in faith. There will be no consistency to our thoughts or balance to our emotions. Nervous exhaustion or mental breakdowns are likely.

IMBALANCING FACTORS

Factors that imbalance Prana, Tejas and Ojas include the use of drugs, whether medical or recreational, excess exposure to mass media influences or computers, too strong sensations (like overly bright colors and loud sounds), excess or pretended emotions and wrong meditational practises. Excess breathing exercises can aggravate Prana. Psychedelic drugs cause Tejas to burn too high.

There is a delicate balance to the mind. Generally any wrong intake of impressions or wrong output of expressions tends to derange it. Disturbance of this underlies most diseases, or, at least, accompanies them.

Balancing Factors

Factors that balance and integrate Prana, Tejas and Ojas include meditation (particularly using breath, mantra and visualization together), prayer, self-study, deep sleep or deep relaxation, and the right use of colors, aromas, incense and gems. Prana particularly is strengthened by time in nature and communion with the cosmic life-force. Attitudes and virtues like faith, love, receptivity, compassion and understanding are also important.

In summary we could say that Tejas is the light of our perceptions. Prana allows us to coordinate our perceptions. Ojas allows us to stabilize them.

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PART I. LESSON 7

STUDY EXERCISE

Examine the levels of Prana, Tejas and Ojas in your own mind. Try to determine their relative proportion (on a scale of 1 low, 2 moderate, 3 high and 4 excessive). What does this tell you about your mental nature, character and disease tendency?

STUDY QUESTIONS

This is the most technical lesson so far, so greater difficulty with it is to be expected.

1. What are the five forms of Vata?
2. What are the five forms of Pitta?
3. What are the five forms of Kapha?
4. What are the main forms of Vata, Pitta and Kapha for treating disease?
5. What are the movements of the five forms of Vata?

6. What are the five minor Pranas?
7. On what different levels does Prana function?
8. Define Prana, Tejas and Ojas?
9. Why is it important that we keep them in balance?
10. What are some factors that imbalance Prana?

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PART I. LESSON 8

AYURVEDIC ANATOMY AND PHYSIOLOGY 4.
THE SEVEN TISSUES (Sapta Dhatu)

According to Ayurveda the human body is composed of seven Dhatus (from the root 'dha' meaning "to support") or tissue layers. This parallels the universe as a whole, which has seven planes of existence.

While the Doshas or biological humors are the causative factors in disease the tissues are the sites of the disease. Hence they are called "dushya", that which can be spoiled. The Dhatus are produced from the digested food mass, the waste products of which are removed through the feces and urine. They form a concentric circle from the gross to the subtle. They are:

1. PLASMA (rasa); sometimes called "skin" (tvak)
2. BLOOD (rakta); specifically the hemoglobin part of it
3. MUSCLE (mamsa)
4. FAT or adipose tissue (medas)
5. BONE (asthi)
6. MARROW and nerve tissue (majja)
7. SEMEN or reproductive tissue, both male and female (shukra)

TISSUES AND THE HUMORS

Kapha (water) is responsible for all the tissues generally and specifically for five of the seven tissues, as it is the basic substance of the body. These are plasma, muscle, fat, marrow and semen.

Pitta and Vata each serve to create one tissue. Pitta (fire) creates blood and Vata (air) creates bone. Hence the humors also create the tissues.

TISSUES AND THE ELEMENTS

Plasma (rasa) is composed primarily of water and is the basic solution in which the other bodily tissues are suspended. It also holds nutrition for all the five elements in the body.

Blood is composed of fire and water, as it is both a fluid and conveys heat (provides oxygen for cell respiration).

Muscle is composed primarily of earth along with secondary water and fire. It is heavy and makes up much of the bulk of the body.

Fat is also mainly water in composition but more refined that plasma.

Bone is composed of earth, its mineral constituents, and air, its porosity.

Marrow is composed of a subtler form of water that has the power to convey nerve impulses, something the less evolved forms of water as plasma and fat cannot. It also has some earth in its composition, as it is heavy.

Reproductive fluid or semen is the essential or causal form of water that has the power to create new life. It is the essence derived from all the tissues.

OJAS

Ojas is often considered as an eighth tissue factor. It is the subtle essence of all the Kapha or water in the body, and specifically the essence of the reproductive fluid. Hence it is the ultimate product of nutrition and digestion, as well as the prime energy reserve for the entire body.

ACTIONS OF THE TISSUES----

PLASMA

The action of plasma is giving nourishment or pleasure (prinana). Plasma provides nutrition to all the tissues and also serves to fill them up and afford us a sense of fullness in life. It is responsible for hydration of the tissues and for maintaining the electrolyte balance.

When the plasma or rasa is sufficient we feel happiness and contentment. We have juice and vitality and enjoy moving and acting. Rasa gives a zest for life and a sense of beauty and joy. The term "rasa" itself means both essence or sap and to circulate, as in the delight of dancing.

Plasma pervades the entire body but its main sites are the heart, blood vessels, lymphatic system, skin and mucous membranes. Plasma and Kapha are closely related. Plasma is the container and Kapha is the contained.

BLOOD

For blood its function is vitalization or sense of life (jivana). On a physical level this is its capacity to oxygenate the cells, which otherwise would not be able to breathe and would decay. Many diseases like cancer occur when the cells lack in oxygen.

When our blood is sufficient our life energy is abounding. We have faith, love and ardor. "Rakta" literally means what is colored or what is red. The blood gives us color both literally and figuratively and, as a circulating fluid like the plasma, gives us ease in movement but with an additional degree of passion.

Blood is parallel to Pitta in its qualities and functions. Blood is the container and Pitta is the contained.

MUSCLE

The function of muscle tissue is plastering or binding (lepana). The muscles like a gelatinous covering serve to cover and give strength to our basic bodily frame. They give us capacity for work and action. When our muscle tissue is deficient we lack cohesion and integration of our structure. When it is sufficient we have courage, confidence and strength, along with the capacity for openness, forgiveness and happiness. The term "mamsa" itself comes from the root "mam" meaning to hold firm.

FAT

The function of fat or adipose tissue is lubrication (snehana; which also means affection), mainly of the muscles and tendons but also other tissues. For example, it helps lubricate the throat and give a melodious voice. Fat gives us a sense of smoothness, ease and, on a psychological level, being cared for. That is why many people become obese; to counter a feeling of not being loved. "Medas" itself means what is oily.

BONE

Vata

The function of bone is support (dharana). The bones serve to uphold all our tissues and give them firmness and a strong foundation. When it is sufficient we have stability, confidence, security, certainty and good stamina. "Asthi" comes from the root "stha", to stand or endure.

Bone holds the Vata or biological air humor in the body. Bone is the container and Vata is the contained.

MARROW

The function of marrow is filling or contentment (purana). Marrow serves to fill the empty spaces in the body, as in the nerve channels, the bones and the brain cavity. It also provides for the secretion of synovial fluid and aids in the lubrication of the eyes, stool and skin. It is of two types, the spinal cord and the bone marrow, the latter which also produces red blood cells.

Marrow gives us a sense of fullness and sufficiency in life. When it is deficient we feel empty and anxious. It provides for affection, love and compassion by its lubricating nature. "Majja" comes from the root "maj", to sink, as the nerve tissue is sunk deep in the bones. Hence it serves to anchor us.

REPRODUCTIVE FLUID/ SEMEN

For the reproductive tissue the function is reproduction (garbha utpadana). It allows us to produce another life and carry on the great stream of human life. Semen here stands for the seed specifically (the ovum in women) and all reproductive fluids in general. When insufficent it causes a general lack of creativity in life and specifically impotence or infertility.

It provides strength, energy and stamina for the entire body and upholds the immune function. "Shukra" itself means "seed" and "luminous" and is also the Sanskrit name for the planet Venus. The reproductive fluid gives light to the eyes and inspiration to the soul.

THE PROCESS OF NUTRITION FOR THE TISSUES

Rasa is the basic plasma of the body. It is closely related to the lymph. It is produced by the digested food fluid by the action of its particular digestive fire. From it the other tissues are produced. All the other tissues depend upon the plasma for their nutrition. The plasma is the basic ocean or solution in which the other tissues exist. They are the seven kinds of tissue inherent in the vital fluid of the body.

Each tissue is a development of the other, like cream from milk. Each is produced by digestion out of the other, so that each below becomes food for the one above. Each tissue is produced by that more gross and produces that more subtle. Plasma when digested becomes blood, blood becomes muscle, muscle becomes fat, fat becomes bone, bone becomes marrow, marrow becomes semen. Hence there is really only one tissue in the human body which undergoes seven levels of transformation or metamorphosis. Problems in any one of the tissues tend to become communicated to all.

FORMATIVE AND STABLE ASPECTS OF THE TISSUES

Each tissue has two aspects, one stable (sthayi) and the other in formation or unstable (asthayi). In the development between the two the following things happen.

1) The formative part of the tissue turns into the stable form by the action of the special "agni" or digestive fire each tissue possesses.

2) In this process of tissue digestion secondary tissues (upadhatus, see below) are also produced (like menstrual fluid for plasma).

3) Waste materials are also produced (like Kapha for plasma), just as in the digestion of food the feces is produced.

4) Finally a purified portion of the formative tissue is produced as the formative tissue for the next tissue-layer.

For example, after the formative plasma produces the stable plasma and its secondary tissues, as well as its waste material of Kapha, there is a subtler form of substance left over which becomes the formative tissue for blood (asthayi rakta), the next tissue level of the body. In this way there is an ongoing flow of nutrition and metamorphosis through the seven tissues.

Hence impairment of nutrition to one tissue will be reflected in those further down the line. The adequate formation of any tissue depends upon two factors; the previous tissue must be properly formed and the digestive fire or Agni of the tissue must be normal and balanced.

If the tissue agni (dhatu agni) is too low too much of the tissue will be produced and its quality will be low. If the tissue agni is too high, too little of the tissue will be produced. It will literally be burnt up.

INTERRELATIONSHIP OF THE TISSUES

On the other hand, the more subtle tissues serve to support the more gross and store their accumulated energy. Hence blood is concentrated plasma, muscle is concentrated blood, fat is concentrated muscle, bone is concentrated fat, marrow is concentrated bone and semen is concentrated marrow. The reproductive fluid is thus the concentrated essence and energy reserve of the entire body.

The grosser tissues are larger in quantity. Only a portion of plasma becomes blood, of which only a portion becomes muscle etc., until only a relatively small amount of reproductive fluid is produced. But the subtler tissues are more concentrated and more enduring.

The subtler tissues are developed through a longer process. While plasma is developed daily with our food, it takes five days for it to transform into blood. For the full formation of semen, therefore, thirty-five days are required. Hence the reproductive fluid supports all the other tissues from the inside, as plasma does from the outside. Just as impaired nutrition through the plasma will weaken all the tissues from without, so will low energy reserve in the form of deficient reproductive fluid cause a collapse of the tissues from within.

The same basic tissue thus has seven densities or layers of thickness, much like the five elements as the five different densities of matter.

Not only do the tissues form a concentric circle, they also form a ring (or we could say that the concentric circle turns back upon itself). Plasma, the first tissue, is also connected directly to semen, the last. Plasma can directly nourish semen, and the

The same basic tissue has 7 densities.

reproductive fluid can nourish or support the plasma. Hence many substances that increase plasma, like milk, also increase semen. Moreover, deficiency of plasma and deficiency of reproductive fluid often go together (and vice versa).

UPADHATUS AND MALAS OF THE DHATUS

SECONDARY TISSUES AND WASTE MATERIALS OF THE TISSUES

Each tissue (dhatu) has a secondary tissue (upadhatu) it produces, as well as a waste material (mala). Sufficiency of the tissue is mirrored in its secondary tissue. Excess or impurity of the tissue is mirrored in its waste products.

The secondary tissues (upadhatu) are:

1. Plasma is breast milk and menstrual flow
2. Blood is the blood vessels and tendons
3. Muscle is the ligaments and skin
4. Fat is the omentum (peritoneal fat in the abdomen)
5. Bone is the teeth
6. Marrow is the sclerotic fluid in the eyes;
7. Semen is Ojas.

The waste materials (mala) are:

1. Plasma is Kapha (phlegm)
2. Blood is Pitta (bile)
3. Muscle is waste material in the outer cavities of the body like the ear and navel, ie. earwax
4. Fat is sweat
5. Bone is nails and hair
6. Marrow is tears and eye secretions
7. Semen is smegma (a waste material secreted by the genitals

THE THREE HUMORS AS WASTE MATERIALS

We see, therefore, that Kapha and Pitta not only produce the plasma and blood but are also their waste materials. In normal amounts they help produce these tissues, but in excess amounts a part of them passes through the tissues as waste materials. When these two tissues are overdeveloped these two humors will be produced in excess also. Hence most Kapha diseases involve the plasma and Pitta diseases the blood.

While Vata is not a waste material of the bone, it is still closely related to it and contained within it. Hence most Vata diseases involve the bones, like arthritis.

EXCESS AND DEFICIENT STATES OF THE TISSUES

Each tissue when overdeveloped or underdeveloped creates characteristic disease symptoms. As noted already, too low condition of the digestive fire of the tissue causes excess but inferior tissue. Too high condition causes deficiency of tissue.

EXCESS STATES---- low agni

1. When excess PLASMA creates accumulation of saliva and phlegm, blocking of the channels, loss of appetite and nausea. Kapha throughout the body tends to be increased.

2. When excess BLOOD creates skin diseases, abscesses, enlargement of the liver and spleen, hypertension, tumors, jaundice, weakness of digestion, delirium, burning sensation and redness or bleeding in the skin, eyes and urine.

3. When excess MUSCLE creates swelling or tumors in the muscles, heaviness and swelling of the glands, obesity, enlargement of the liver, irritability and aggression. In women fibroid conditions may occur or miscarriage. Often sexual vitality is impaired.

4. When excess FAT creates obesity, fatigue, lack of mobility, asthma, sexual debility, thirst, hypertension, diabetes, poor longevity and sagging of the thighs, breast and belly. Emotionally there will be fear and attachment.

5. When excess BONE creates extra bones, bone spurs and extra teeth, excessively large frame, pain in the joints, as well as fear, anxiety and poor stamina. Such individuals always tend towards arthritis. In extreme cases bone cancer or gigantism can occur.

6. When excess MARROW creates heaviness of the eyes, the limbs, and in the origins of the joints, deep non-healing sores, and turbidity or infections in the eyes.

7. When excess SEMEN creates excessive sexual desire, often leading to anger, excess quantity of semen, stones in the semen and swelling of the prostate.

We see, therefore, that excess states of the tissues reveal themselves in excess conditions of the humors that produce them. Excess conditions of plasma, muscle, fat, marrow and semen are different degrees of high Kapha. Excess blood is like high Pitta; excess bone like high Vata.

DEFICIENT STATES----

1. When deficient PLASMA creates roughness of the skin, dryness of the lips, dehydration, weariness, intolerance of sound, as well as tremors, palpitations, pain and sense of emptiness in the heart and exhaustion after slight exertion. Nutrition to the body as a whole is impaired.

2. When deficient BLOOD creates pallor, low blood pressure, shock, desire for sour and cold food, looseness and dryness of the head, loss of skin lustre, collapse of the blood vessels, dryness, roughness and cracks in the skin.

3. When deficient MUSCLE creates emaciation, particularly of the hips, abdomen and back of the neck, fatigue and looseness of the limbs, lack of coordination, fear, insecurity and unhappiness.

4. When deficient FAT creates tiredness, cracking of the joints, weariness of the eyes, enlargement of the spleen, emaciation of the limbs and thinness of the abdomen, along with brittleness or weakness of hair, nails, teeth and bones.

5. When deficient BONE creates weariness, pain or looseness in the joints and falling of the teeth, hair and nails. Bone and teeth formation tends to be poor. Dwärfism occurs in extreme cases.

6. When deficient MARROW creates weakness or porosity of the bones, pain in the small joints, dizziness and the seeing of spots before the eyes, darkness around the eyes, as well as sexual debility and feelings of emptiness and fear. Vata diseases always tend to result in deficiency of the nerve tissue.

7. When deficient SEMEN creates lack of vigor, lack of sexual desire, sterility, impotence, dryness of the mouth, lassitude, weariness, lower back pain, difficulty and slowness in ejaculation and blood in the semen. Emotionally there will be fear, anxiety and lack of love.

Most deficient states of the tissues present various high Vata symptoms. A tissue when deficient will fail to nourish the consequent tissue and so symptoms of its deficiency may occur as well.

TISSUE DEVELOPMENT

Kapha people usually have the best development of tissue but tend towards overdevelopment. Blood and bone, the Pitta and Vata tissues in the body, tend to be underdeveloped.

Overdevelopment of plasma and production of excess phlegm may block the development of blood. Overdevelopment of muscle tends to cause underdevelopment of deeper tissues, particularly fat and reproductive tissue. Overdevelopment of fat similarly blocks development of other tissues, particularly bone, marrow and reproductive fluid. Fat people place more pressure on their bones and usually have low libido.

Pitta people usually possess large quantities of blood but its quality is not good. It is often mixed with bile. Often they have good muscles as well.

Vata people often have good bones but all the other tissues tend to be deficient, particularly fat and plasma (which both serve to hydrate, lubricate and cushion the body).

Underdevelopment of any tissue will block the development of the others. It will not only fail to nourish those more subtle but fail to uphold those more gross. Lack of fat, for example, will not only fail to nourish the bones, it will also fail to lubricate the muscles causing that tissue to suffer as well.

OPTIMAL STATES OF THE TISSUES

Individuals may have the tissues in a state of purity or perfection; that is, they show them in a state of optimum functioning (Dhatu Sara). This affords a special strength to the constitution and gives good health. It also shows us what to look for in healthy tissue.

1. The optimal state of PLASMA (rasa) is revealed by good complexion, by soft, smooth, oily and glowing skin and hair, by good stamina, compassion and happy disposition.

2. The optimal state of BLOOD is revealed by good color in the hands and feet, the cheeks, the lips and tongue, the conjunctiva of the eyes and the ear pina, by warm skin, by good vitality but sensitivity to sun and heat and by good vitality and much passion in life.

3. The optimal state of MUSCLE is revealed by good physical strength, capacity for exercise, adaptability in movement and well development of muscles in the neck, shoulders and thighs. The character will be strong with much courage, fortitude and integrity.

4. The optimal state of FAT is revealed by adequate but not excessive fat in the body, good lubrication of tissues, with oiliness of the hair, eyes and feces, by a melodious voice, and emotionally much love, affection, joy and humor.

5. The optimal state of BONE is revealed by tall frame, large joints, prominent and straight bones with flexibility in movement. The teeth will be white, large and strong and the feet tend to be long. Psychologically, there is much patience, consistency, stability and capacity for hard work.

6. The optimal state of MARROW is indicated by large clear eyes, by strong joints, by good sensory acuity, by good powers of speech and by capacity to withstand pain. The mind will be sharp, clear, sensitive and responsive, with a good memory, and the feeling nature will be open, receptive and compassionate.

7. The optimal state of SEMEN (reproductive fluid) is revealed by lustre in the eyes, good growth of hair, by well formed sexual organs (like the scrotum or the breasts), by attractive body, by charm of personality and capacity for love, empathy and compassion.

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BUILDING THE TISSUES

Each tissue is built up by substances of like (homogenous) nature. Hence muscle tissue can be built up by the eating of red meat; fat by the eating of animal fat; bone by eating of bone or cartilage; marrow by marrow soup; and semen by eating of eggs or the reproductive organs of various mammals (which is commonly done in Chinese medicine). Blood can also be built up by eating of red (blood containing) meat. This, however, is a gross way to increase the tissues. It is strong for building them but does not produce a high quality of tissues as the animal tissues may be too directly substituted for the human. It is generally tamasic in nature.

Other substances of similar nature (homologous) or possessing the same attributes can increase the tissues:

PLASMA can be built up by fruit juices, particularly sour juices, lemon or lime, with a little salt. It is also built up by dairy products, particularly milk.

BLOOD can be built up by iron containing foods and preparations, like molasses or black grapes, or vegetables with vitamin A, like carrots and beets.

MUSCLE can be built up by grains like wheat and oats, by beans, nuts and other protein containing foods.

FAT can be built up by vegetable fats like sesame oil or by butter and ghee, or by cheese and dairy products generally.

BONE can be built up by mineral supplements like calcium, iron and zinc or mineral containing food.

MARROW can be built up by butter and ghee (clarified butter), by seeds and nuts containing oils, particularly almonds.

SEMEN can be built up by milk, raw sugars and ghee, and by seeds and nuts like almonds, sesame seeds, lotus seeds.

For example, milk, sugar and ghee, like semen are sweet, cold and oily in properties, hence they will tend to increase it. Milk moreover is a product of the reproductive system and will tend to feed it.

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THE TISSUES AND THE DISEASE PROCESS

Diseases of the humors are usually reflected in the tissues they govern. Kapha diseases usually involve plasma; Pitta diseases the blood and Vata diseases the bones.

However, any of the humors can enter into any of the tissues and cause various diseases. Diseases are classified not only according to the humors but according to which of the tissues the humors have entered into.

In this way a severe muscle infection can be called "Pitta in the muscles" (mamsagata Pitta), osteoarthritis can be called "Vata in the bones" (asthigata Vata). More will be said of this kind of classification when we discuss diseases.

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PART I. LESSON 8

STUDY EXERCISE

Examine the seven tissues of your body according to the attributes they present. Note what their condition means in terms of your health and character. Examine a friend in a similar way.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What are the seven tissues (dhatu)?
2. How do the three humors make up the seven tissues?
3. What are the actions of each of the seven tissues?
4. What is the basic process of tissue nutrition?

5. Outline the process of nutrition for the plasma?
6. What are the signs of excess and deficiency of each of the seven tissues?
7. How can the tissues be built up?
8. What are the optimal states of tissues (dhatu sara)?
9. How are Pitta and Kapha waste-materials of tissues?

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PART I. LESSON 9

AYURVEDIC ANATOMY AND PHYSIOLOGY 5.
KALAS, MALAS (WASTE MATERIALS) AND AGNI

THE SEVEN KALAS OR NUTRITIVE MEMBRANES

Each of the seven tissues and their channels has a special membrane that allows for the absorption and diffusion of nutrients. These membranes serve to demarcate the underlying tissue from its channels, thus they also serve to seal and protect it. They are the main site of the Dhatu agni or the digestive fire of the tissue. They allow the basic food substance for the tissue to be filtered from the waste products. They are important parts of the Ayurvedic view of anatomy which also should be memorized. Some dysfunction of them will be found in most diseases. They are---

1. SLESHMA DHARA KALA, the membrane that holds Kapha
2. PITTA DHARA KALA, the membrane that holds Pitta
3. MAMSA DHARA KALA, the membrane that holds muscle
4. MEDO DHARA KALA, the membrane that holds fat
5. PURISHA DHARA KALA, the membrane that holds feces
6. MAJJA DHARA KALA, the membrane that holds marrow
7. SHUKRA DHARA KALA, the membrane that holds semen

Most of these are named after their respective tissues, like Mamsa dhara kala, the membrane that holds muscle for muscle. The others are named after their respective waste material. The membranes not only serve to feed the tissue but to filter out the waste materials. Hence they can be named in either sense.

Kapha, also called "Shleshma" or phlegm, as indicated, is the waste material of plasma (rasa) and Pitta of blood (rakta). Pitta dhara kala is also the membrane of the gastro-intestinal tract and is responsible for much of the digestive process for the body as a whole.

The membrane for the bones is named after the lining of the colon, as this is its site in the body. Vata is absorbed mainly through the colon and the nutrients to feed the bones are taken in at this place also. The positive side of Vata (Prana) will be absorbed into the bones as the vital energy for the deeper tissues of the body. The negative side of Vata becomes the gas dispelled

from the colon. Hence if this membrane is not functioning properly this gas will be taken into the bone tissue and cause various derangements. In this way, abnormalities in colon functioning tend to damage the bones. For this reason also, the treatment of the colon is essential for most Vata and bone disorders, like arthritis.

Moreover, the colon is the site where the negative aspect of the earth element is expelled from the body. It is also the site where the positive aspect, the nutrition for the bones, is assimilated.

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THE THREE MALAS, THE WASTE MATERIALS OF THE BODY

There are three primary waste materials of the body; feces (purisha), urine (mutra) and sweat (sveda). These are called the three "malas" from the root "mal", to darken, stain or harm. Unlike biological humors they do not have a constructive function in the body but like them they do help to maintain body function in their process of discharge.

Waste materials themselves can be damaged or vitiated and become the sites of disease. The excess humors (doshas) can affect them and also the abnormal tissues (dhatus). The excess humors can mix with them and cause various complications.

FUNCTIONS OF THE WASTE MATERIALS

The function of the feces is to give support (avasthamabhana), particularly to maintain the tone of the colon and keep the digestive and lower abdominal organs (like the uterus also) from prolapsing. In addition it maintains the temperature of the colon and its mucous membranes.

The function of urine is in carrying away waste water (kleda vahanam); that of sweat, is in separating out the waste water (kleda vidhruti). Both serve to cleanse waste water from the system.

Generally, we sweat more in the summer and urinate more in the winter, as hot weather promotes more sweating to cool us down and cold weather tends to increase urine by its sinking and contracting action.

Feces comes from the action of the colon and serves to discharge excess earth from the body (excess air is also discharged from the colon, as both are by products of the digestive process).

Urine comes from the action of the bladder and serves to discharge excess water from the body, as well as other solid wastes in solution.

Sweat, comes from the action of the lungs and serves to discharge excess water and other toxins also. Sweat also aids in the cooling of the body and the moistening of the skin and surface hair. It carries excess fat from the body.

All three waste materials aid in the discharge of excess heat from the body, as the discharge of waste materials has a generally cooling action. Urine also carries acids from the blood (Pitta), as does sweat and aids in blood purification.

Normally, one should have one good bowel movement a day in the morning and perhaps a second later on in the day. Urination should occur three to five times a day, with no night urination. Sweating should only be noticed upon exertion or hot weather. Other patterns indicate some vitiation or abnormality of the waste materials.

Normal feces = 1 in morning perhaps again
urine = 3-5 x per day
sweat = only noticeable in hot or exertion

THE MEDICINAL NATURE OF URINE

Of the three waste materials the urine uniquely is a medicinal substance and contains subtle portions of all the seven tissues. Hence it can be drunk to regulate and balance the organs and tissues of the body.

The middle portion of the urine first thing in the morning is preferable for this purpose. It is diuretic, laxative and promotes healing of tissues internally or externally. Hence it can be used as a wash for ulcers, sores and skin diseases and is particularly good for fungus infections. It also improves the appetite, balances digestion and helps dispel parasites.

Yet we should mention that some Ayurvedic doctors do not view urine therapy as Ayurvedic and do not recommend it. Some recommend it even though they do not regard it as Ayurvedic. Please note that one does not have to practice urine therapy in order to be a good Ayurvedic practitioner or in order to have optimum health.

The three Malas are governed primarily by Apana vayu, the downward moving air, specifically feces and urine. Sweat is governed by Vyana, the outward moving air. Both these forms of Prana when functioning normally allow for the discharge of waste materials, when obstructed they cause their accumulation.

ABNORMALITIES OF THE THREE WASTE MATERIALS

Excess waste materials can be aggravating factors in the disease process. When not discharged properly they will accumulate and then invade and damage the surrounding tissue. Deficient waste materials, however, can also be aggravating factors in disease. Their organs will not have sufficient material to work and their function will gradually atrophy.

EXCESS STATES----
FECES

"Excess of Feces causes abdominal pain and distention, constipation, feeling of heaviness and pain on excretion." It brings too much earth in the body and increases toxins indicated by bad breath and body odor. It causes indigestion, headaches, dullness and impairment of movement.

URINE

"Excess of Urine causes pain in the bladder and a feeling of needing to urinate even after having just finished urination." It usually involves excess water and water retention, frequent urination and thirst.

SWEAT

"Excess of Sweat causes profuse sweating, unpleasant body odor and oozing type skin diseases." Often excess fire or Pitta is involved with skin diseases like urticaria, eczema, boils, and fungus infections.

Eventually, however, too much sweating, particularly in thin or Vata constitution individuals, can cause dehydration, fatigue and convulsions. This, however, is a different condition than an excess of sweat in the body generally. (quotes ASHTANGA HRIDAYA I.11.12-13.)

DEFICIENCY STATES----
FECES

"Deficiency of Feces causes gas and dryness in the intestines, abdominal distention and abnormal and painful movements of Vata upwards and to the side." It brings about a deficiency of earth in the body that causes low energy, ungroundedness, nervousness and wrong movement of nerve impulses (wind) in the body, mainly Vata disorders, including chest pain, palpitations and lower back ache, as well as prolapse of the organs.

URINE

"Deficiency of Urine causes difficult urination, discoloration of urine or blood in the urine and thirst." It is related to deficiency of water in the body, Pitta and Vata disorders, including fever and dehydration.

SWEAT

"Deficiency of Sweat causes absence of sweating, stiffness of the hairs along the skin and fissures in the skin." It causes dry skin, wrinkles, dandruff, skin diseases and susceptibility to colds, flu and other surface conditions and generally Vata disorders. It often indicates poor peripheral circulation.

(quotes ASHTANGA HRIDAYA, I.11.21-22.

DAMAGING FACTORS----
FECES

The Feces is damaged by such factors as excess use of purgatives or colonics, by food that is too heavy or too light, by bad food combinations, by excess travel, by sleeping late, by coffee and drugs, by antibiotics, by dysentery, by inadequate exercise and by emotional factors such as worry and fear. Any low energy condition can manifest as a weakening of the colon (the support site of Prana, the life-force).

URINE

The Urine is damaged by use of diuretic drugs, herbs or foods, by drinking too much or drinking too little, by alcohol, by excess sex, and by emotional factors like trauma and fright.

SWEAT

Sweat is damaged by too much use of diaphoretic substances or sweating method (saunas, hot tubs, sweat lodges etc.), by food that is too dry, by lack of salt in the diet and by under or over exercise.

INCREASING AND DECREASING FACTORS

Waste materials can be increased by like substances also.

FECES

Feces can be increased by bulk laxatives, bran, grains like barley, most beans, root vegetables like potatoes and most leafy vegetables. Meat will also increase it. It is decreased by fasting, use of purgatives and laxatives, eating light food and drinking fruit juices.

URINE

Urine can be increased by drinking more water, by drinking sugar water, by fruit juices and other liquids. It is decreased by fasting from water, by light or dry food and by exposure to heat.

SWEAT

Sweat can be increased by sour fruit juices with salt (like the factors that increase plasma or rasa) and by exposure to heat. It is decreased by fasting from water, by dry food or by exposure to cold.

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EXCRETORY ORIFICES

All the nine orifices of the body have elimination functions. These nine orifices are the two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, mouth, urethra and anus.

Seven are in the head and two are located below. The eyes produce tears, the ears earwax, the nostrils nasal phlegm, the mouth phlegm and saliva, the urethra urine and the anus feces.

Moreover, the entire body is covered with sweat glands. These waste products not only serve to discharge toxins from the tissues, they also aid in the lubrication and cleansing of their sites.

It is the nature of the body, as something material to decay, to decompose back into its constituent elements, mainly earth. It is also necessary to continually cleanse the body to prevent the build up of waste materials within it. Hence it is important to keep these orifices clear and functioning well.

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AGNI/ THE DIGESTIVE FIRE

The body rests upon the principle of energy as its basis. It is an organism devised to produce energy to allow for perception, action and expression. This central energy is represented by the element of fire. Its main form in the body is the digestive fire. In the Vedas the human being is said to be fire, to represent the element of fire on earth as a perceiving consciousness. "Agni" is a Vedic term meaning burning, transforming or perceiving, from the root "ang", to burst or flame forth.

Agni has the all the qualities of fire. The digestive fire is hot, dry, light, fragrant, subtle, mobile and penetrating. It is increased by hot fragrant spices like ginger, black pepper and cayenne, as these have similar nature.

When Agni is sufficient there will be no toxic build ups in the body, the mind and senses will be clear and acute, and we will possess the energy to change our lives in a positive direction. When Agni is deranged we will suffer from dullness, heaviness, stagnation and cloudiness of emotion and perception.

FOUR CONDITIONS OF AGNI

Four conditions of the digestive fire are recognized:

1. High (tikshna)
2. Low (manda)
3. Variable (vishama)
4. Balanced (sama)

The digestive fire is usually high in Pitta (fire) types. Pitta types have strong appetites and good powers of digestion but do not usually gain excessive weight. They have the appetites of goats, a Pitta animal.

It is low in Kapha (water) types. Kapha types have low but constant appetites and slow metabolism and so tend to hold weight even when they do not eat a lot.

It is variable in Vata (wind) types, with their fluctuating nature and nervous digestion. Vata types are alternatively very hungry or not hungry at all.

Agni is balanced when the humors and emotions are in a state of balance. Regular and moderate appetite with good power of digestion is an important sign of health.

THIRTEEN FORMS OF AGNI

Thirteen forms of Agni in the body are generally recognized. These are----

1. The DIGESTIVE FIRE called "Jatharagni", the agni in the belly.

This is the main form of fire and the main power of digestion in the body. It imparts its energy to all the secretions and enzymes involved in the process of digestion in the stomach and intestines.

2-6. The FIVE ELEMENTAL FIRES or "Bhutagnis".

These reside in the liver and are responsible for turning the digested food material into the forms of the five elements necessary for building the respective tissues in the body. If their functioning is impaired the respective element in the body will not be formed correctly. Such substances as ghee or aloe gel help regulate the elemental digestive fires.

Some consider that these agnis are responsible for producing the tissues and energies for the development of the five senses.

7-13. The SEVEN TISSUE FIRES or "Dhatu agnis".

Each of the seven tissues has its own digestive power. As mentioned in the section on the tissues, it is responsible for proper formation of the tissue. When too low too much tissue and tissue of an inferior nature will be produced. When too high not enough tissue will be formed.

Some Ayurvedic thinkers consider the five forms of Pitta to be five additional forms of Agni. They also count an Agni for each of the three humors and three waste materials.

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THE PROCESS OF DIGESTION

Three stages of digestion are recognized in Ayurveda according to the functioning of the three humors---

KAPHA STAGE

The first stage of digestion occurs in the mouth and stomach. It is dominated by the sweet taste and the Kapha secretions of

saliva and the alkaline secretions of the stomach. This allows the earth and water elements to be digested. It is the preliminary stage of digestion that renders the food liquid and homogenous and capable of being worked upon by the digestive fire.

Most Kapha problems occur at or are involved with this stage of digestion, like nausea, lack of appetite and vomiting of phlegm. They usually occur when we eat too much heavy, greasy, sweet, salty mucus forming or Kapha increasing food.

PITTA STAGE

The second stage of digestion occurs in the stomach and small intestine. It is dominated by sour taste and the acid (Pitta) secretions of the liver, pancreas and small intestine. This digests the fire element. Through it the food releases its heat and energy and gives strength to the body. This is the main stage of digestion.

Most Pitta problems occur at or are involved with this stage of digestion, like hyperacidity, heartburn and ulcers. They are usually caused by food that is too hot, sour or spicy (Pitta in nature) or by drinking alcohol with meals.

VATA STAGE

The third stage of digestion occurs in the large intestine. It is dominated by the pungent taste and the gas released in the colon (Vata). At this stage the air and ether elements in the food are absorbed. The waste material, the undigestible part of earth, is discarded as feces. The undigested water is absorbed and transferred from here to be eliminated through urination as well.

The purer air released in this process of digestion in the colon serves to feed the five forms of Vata in the body. The impure or foul smelling air or gas is also discarded as waste material. This is the latter or subsequent stage of digestion, involved with the process of elimination and with the assimilation of subtle nutrients.

Most Vata problems occur at or are involved with this stage of digestion, like gas, distention and constipation. They are usually caused by food that is too light, dry or astringent (Vata) in nature.

GENERAL PROCESS OF DIGESTION

The digestive fire works on the food mass that has been swallowed and liquified. It separates the pure or nutritive part of the food (sara) from the waste material (kitta). This it breaks down into the forms of the five elements.

These in turn are absorbed and transferred to the liver where the elemental agnis break turn them into the respective elemental tissues for the human body.

The earth elements digested and transformed from the food serve to build up the basic bulk or protein of the body, like the muscles.

The water elements build up the vital fluids and fat.

The fire elements build up the enzymes and hemoglobin.

The air elements build up the bone and nerve plexuses.

The ether elements build up the mind and senses.

AMA

If, however, the digestive fire is not functioning properly, the food mass is not converted in the right way. It leaves a residue of undigested or partially digested food that can accumulate, stagnate, ferment and cause disease. This wrongly digested toxic food mass is called "Ama" in Sanskrit (from the root "am" meaning to harm or to weaken).

This is the beginning of the disease process for all disease. It is the weakness of the digestive fire and the accumulation of the undigested food mass that weakens our defensive system and causes us to come down with diseases starting with the common cold. No disease can affect us if our digestive fire is functioning normally. Hence the state of Agni is the key to the health of the body.

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PART I. LESSON 9

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What are the three waste materials of the body?
2. What positive roles do they play?
3. In what way is urine a medicinal substance?
4. What are the excess and deficient conditions of the three waste materials.
5. What are the excretory orifices in the body?

6. What are the seven kalas?
7. What is Agni?
8. What are the four conditions of the digestive fire?
9. What are the three stages of digestion?
10. What are the thirteen forms of Agni in the body?

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PART I. LESSON 10

AYURVEDIC ANATOMY AND PHYSIOLOGY 6.
BODILY SYSTEMS (Srotas)

Ayurveda views the human body as composed of innumerable channels. These supply the various tissues of the body. They are called "Srotas" in Sanskrit from the root "sru" meaning to flow. The body is like a system of canals or rivers. These serve to nourish the different tissues and organs of the body. They also serve to keep them clean. Moreover, they are the network of forces that sustains and upholds them. They contain the tissues within their fabric.

The channels are said to have a similar color to the tissue or substance they carry. They are of both large and small sizes, tubular in shape and while the larger ones are straight, the smaller ones form lattice like networks.

Health is the proper flow through these channels. When unobstructed they allow for the proper give and take of nutrients and waste materials and also serve to maintain communication between the different tissues and organs. Disease is nothing but improper flow through the channels. These are four,

1. excessive flow,
2. deficient flow,
3. blockage of flow or
4. flow out of the proper channel altogether.

Excessive flow is when the flow through the channels is too much or too quick. This floods the tissues and they can hyper;function or become overly developed. Deficient flow is when the flow is too light or too slow. This causes the tissues to hypofunction, dry up or to accumulate waste materials.

Blockage of flow occurs when the humors, waste materials or Ama accumulate, stagnate and harden in the channels. This also blocks the supply to the tissues, which may cause them to accumulate waste materials or to waste away in time. Blockage of flow may sometimes result from deficient flow that allows the flow to stagnate and congeal.

Flow out of the proper channel usually is a result of blockage

of flow. What is not allowed to flow in the normal way, like water, will try to flow in an abnormal way. This will cause a flow of improper substances into tissues or may break the channels and directly invade the tissues. As the fluid has not been metabolized such intrusions can be very damaging to the underlying tissues. Hence this condition is the worst and is the eventual outcome of the other wrong flows through the channels.

The excess humors and waste materials can move into the channels causing these various wrong flows. Usually a wrong flow is caused by some excess or inappropriate material accumulating in the channels. However, Vata (wind), as governing all impulses and energy flows is the main factor behind the flow in the channels. Clearing the channels is an important concept in Ayurvedic healing and also that of Chinese medicine.

The channels are similar to the different physiological systems of Western medicine but also contain subtler energy fields like the meridian system of Chinese medicine. Diseases are classified according to the systems they involve. A complex symptomology of channel system disorders exists in Ayurveda. Examination of the channels through various diagnostic measures is one of the main tools for determining the nature, site and power of disease.

Three channels connect with the outside environment and bring in nourishment to the body in the form of breath, food and water----

1. PRANA VAHA SROTAS: the channels that carry Prana, the breath or life force; primarily the respiratory system (though aspects of the circulatory and digestive system are contained in this idea as well). Its origin is the heart and gastrointestinal tract, primarily the colon. Prana is not only absorbed through the lungs but also through the colon. It is distributed with the blood and plasma via the heart.

2. ANNA VAHA SROTAS: the channels that carry food (anna); mainly the digestive system. Its origin is in the stomach and left side of the body. This system is also called "Mahasrotas", the great channel, as it is the main canal in the body, the gastrointestinal tract.

3. AMBHU VAHA SROTAS: the channels that carry water (ambhu) or regulate water metabolism. This does not have an equivalent in Western medicine, but it is like the fluid absorbing aspect of the digestive system. It governs the assimilation of water and water containing foods like sugar. Diabetes, for example, is a disease of this system. Its origin is the palate and pancreas, which are involved in sugar metabolism.

Connect w/ outside environ.

Seven channels supply the seven tissues of the body---

4. RASA VAHA SROTAS: the channels that carry plasma (rasa). This is similar to the lymphatic system (and circulatory system together). This plasma is the solution in which all the tissues of the body reside, like islands in the sea. Its origin is in the heart and blood vessels. It forms the primary network of channels in the entire body.

5. RAKTA VAHA SROTAS: the channels that carry blood (rakta). This relates to the circulatory system, particularly the hemoglobin containing part of the blood (red blood cells). Its origin is the liver and spleen wherein the red blood cells are produced and destroyed.

6. MAMSA VAHA SROTAS: the channels that supply the muscles (mamsa) or the muscular system. Its origin is the ligaments and skin to which muscle tissue is connected.

7. MEDO VAHA SROTAS: the channels that supply fat or adipose tissue (medas), or the adipose system. Its origin is the kidneys and omentum (abdominal fat).

8. ASTHI VAHA SROTAS: the channels that supply the bones (asthi) or the skeletal system. Its origin is adipose tissue and the hips (where the largest bones in the body are found).

9. MAJJA VAHA SROTAS: the channels that supply the marrow and nerve tissue (majja), mainly the nervous system (cerebrospinal fluid). Its origin is the bones and joints.

10. SHUKRA VAHA SROTAS: the channels that supply the reproductive tissue (shukra) or the reproductive system. Its origin is the testes or uterus, wherein the semen and ovum are produced.

Three additional channels connect to the outside world and allow for the elimination of substances from the body. The waste product of breath is sweat, of food is feces, of water is urine. These three waste materials (Malas) and their channels can also be damaged or obstructed by excess accumulations of the humors or of their own products----

11. SVEDA VAHA SROTAS: the channels that carry sweat (sveda) or the sebaceous system. Its origin is adipose tissue and the hair follicles to which the sebaceous glands are connected. (Hence the more fat we have the more we tend to sweat).

12. PURISHA VAHA SROTAS: the channels that carry feces (purisha) or the excretory system. Its origin is the colon and rectum, the organ of excretion.

13. MUTRA VAHA SROTAS: the channels that carry urine (mutra) or the urinary system. Its origin is the bladder and kidneys, the organs of urination.

Two special systems exist within the female for purposes of reproduction and child-rearing. When the breast milk is flowing, menstruation does not occur. Hence the main action of these two channels is largely mutually exclusive. Both can be seen as two aspects of one system and both products, menstrual fluid and breast milk are secondary tissues (upadhatus) of the plasma (rasa)----

14. ARTAVA VAHA SROTAS: the channels that carry menstruation (artava) and the other sexual secretions or the female reproductive system. (Shukravaha Srotas in women relates more to general reproductive and hormonal function, including growth hormones, which exists both before and after the time of life wherein in menstruation can occur). Its origin is also in the uterus.

15. STANYA VAHA SROTAS: the channels that carry the breast milk (stanya) or the system of lactation, treated as the subsystem of the previous, with its origin in the uterus as well.

female

The mind itself exists as a special system. This makes sixteen total systems for the female; fourteen for the male----

16. MANO VAHA SROTAS: the channels that carry thought or the mental system. It has no physical origin, rather it creates the body. Its origin is in the nerve tissue and emotion.

The mind connects to the nervous system (majjavaha srotas) through which it can motivate the entire body and to the reproductive system (shukravaha srotas), which as the physical site of desire binds us to the body.

This refers to the part of the mind that connects with the physical body and allows for activation of the sensory and motor systems. It does not refer to the subtle aspect of the mind not directly connected to physical processes.

mind

THE MIND AND CHANNEL FUNCTIONING

Thought itself is a kind of substance that can be measured through the brain waves and produces various biochemical reactions in the brain. Wherever we direct our attention in the body our thoughts travel with it and along with it energy.

The movement of energy in all the channels depends upon the stimuli that arise from the mind, which are transferred by Vata (wind). Hence mental disturbance can cause disorders in any of the channels. Emotional blockages cause energy stagnation that results in blockages in the flow of the channels. Thus clearing out suppressed emotions in the mind is essential for the proper

circulation of energy in the body. Emotional outbursts or lack of mental control are like flow out of the channels in the physical body and can produce such conditions as in strokes or heart attacks.

Excessive or deficient mental activity can cause excess or deficient flow in the channels of the body. Excessive flow in the mind may cause deficient flow in the body and vice versa.

Worry, which is excessive mental activity, is one of the major causes of disease in the body.

FACTORS THAT DERANGE THE FUNCTIONING OF THE CHANNELS

Most of these factors relate to wrong eating habits, to wrong exercise habits, to wrong use of the organs or systems involved and to emotional factors. They often relate to factors that overly increase the tissue or function involved.

1. "The channels carrying the Breath or life-force (PRANAVAHA SROTAS) are damaged by malnutrition, suppression of natural urges, too much dryness, by physical exertion while hungry and other such harmful practises."

The factors that weaken the movement of Prana are mainly those that aggravate Vata, as Prana is Vata. Other factors including smoking, air pollution, loud talking or shouting, excess singing, and overexercise.

2. "The channels that carry Food (ANNAVAHA SROTAS) are damaged by overeating, by eating at the wrong time, by unwholesome food and by derangement of the digestive fire."

The digestive system is damaged by wrong quantity of food, untimely or irregular eating and by food that has poor nutritional quality, such as old, stale, canned, artificial or junk food. Also any abnormal functioning of the digestive fire will bring it about.

3. "The channels bringing in Water (AMBHUVAHA SROTAS) are damaged by exposure to heat, by improperly digested food (ama), by fear, by drinking of alcohol, by too much dry food and by excessive thirst."

These are mainly Vata and Pitta increasing factors and work mainly through reducing the water in our body, which makes it difficult for these channels to function, mainly what causes dehydration.

4. "The channels that carry Plasma (RASAVAHA SROTAS) are damaged by eating food that is too heavy, too cold, too mucus forming, by overeating and by excessive worry."

The factors that damage the plasma and lymphatic system are mainly those that aggravate Kapha and increase mucus, like sweets and dairy products.

5. "The channels that carry Blood (RAKTAVAHA SROTAS) are damaged by food and drink that is too stimulating (vidahi), oily, hot and liquid and by overexposure to heat and sun."

The factors that damage the circulatory system are mainly those that aggravate Pitta. These are hot, spicy, sour, oily and salty food; sweet, heavy, greasy and oily food, meats etc.

6. "The channels that supply the Muscles (MAMSAVAHA SROTAS) are damaged by food that is too oily and liquid (abhisyandi), too gross or heavy, and by sleeping during the day."

The factors that damage the muscular system are also mainly those that increase Kapha, particularly its attribute of heaviness. Wrong exercise can also do this.

7. "The channels that carry Fat (MEDOVAHA SROTAS) are damaged by lack of exercise, by sleeping during the day, by eating too much oily and fatty food and by too much alcohol."

The factors that increase fat tissue and cause obesity are also mainly those that increase Kapha, particularly heavy, oily and watery food.

8. "The channels that supply the Bones (ASTHIVAHA SROTAS) are damaged by excessive exertion that jerks and strains the bones and by Vata increasing regimes."

The factors that damage the bones are mainly those that increase Vata, like light, dry or insufficient diet. Activity that is very erratic or strongly jarring will tend to damage the bones.

9. "The channels that supply the Nerves and marrow (MAJJAVAHA SROTAS) are damaged by crushing, dislocation or breaking of the bones, by extreme pain and taking of bad food combinations."

The nervous system is damaged mainly by trauma, physical or emotional, including overly harsh sensations like violence or noise, though a disruptive diet can also imbalance it in time. Intestinal gas can aggravate the nerves.

10. "The channels that carry the Reproductive Fluid (SHUKRAVAHA SROTAS) are damaged by sexual indulgence at the wrong time, by suppression of the sexual urge, by promiscuity and by surgical practises."

The reproductive system is deranged by improper sexual activity. Surgery, though sometimes necessary, by its strong nature tends to damage this the deepest tissue of the body. Surgery here includes the application of heat. An extreme modern example of this would be chemotherapy.

11. "The channels that carry Sweat (SVEDAVAHA SROTAS) are damaged by excess exercise, by exposure to heat, by taking food that is too hot or too cold and by emotions like anger, grief and fear."

Excess exercise, heat, hot food and hot emotions like anger promote too much sweating. Food that is too cold and cold emotions like grief and fear make us shiver and stop sweating.

12. "The channels that carry the Feces (PURISHAVAHA SROTAS) are damaged by withholding the urge to defecate, by overeating, by eating when a previous meal has not been digested and by the weak digestive fire of the emaciated."

The factors that derange the excretory system are like those of the digestive system plus irregularity in attending to the urge.

13. "The channels that carry Urine (MUTRAVAHA SROTAS) are damaged by inordinate intake of food and drink, by excessive sex, by withholding the urge to urinate, by debilitating diseases and by trauma."*

The urinary system gets easily damaged by wrong use of the urinogenital organs and by any trauma or weakness, including too much travelling, as the kidneys are a sensitive organ.

*(Quotes Charak Samhita V.10-22.)

Special symptoms for the two additional female systems are not given but the following would fall along these lines.

14. The channels that carry the Menstrual Fluid (ARTAVAVAHA SROTAS) are damaged by the same factors as those which damage the reproductive system (shukravaha srotas), like excess or deficient sex, also lack of proper nourishment and emotional factors like anger, grief and fear.

15. The channels that carry the Breast Milk (STANYAVAHA SROTAS) are damaged by suppression of the breast milk (not breast feeding the child), by not having children, or by too prolonged breast feeding of the child.

The channels of the mental system are damaged mainly by emotional factors.

16. The channels that carry Thought (MANOVAHA SROTAS) are damaged by excess emotion, by suppression of emotion, by drugs, and by taking in excessively strong sensory stimuli (like loud music, too much television etc.).

DIETARY FACTORS THAT BLOCK THE CHANNELS

The channels are generally blocked by food that is too heavy or sticky in nature. Such food is slow in movement and can inhibit flow through the channels. This is mainly food that increases Kapha and Ama (the products of indigestion).

These foods include dairy products, particularly cheese,

yogurt, butter and ice cream; heavy and fatty meats like pork, greasy oils like lard and most animal fats; sticky and sweet breads, pastries and candies, even an excess of bananas. Such foods will aggravate most channel blockage conditions like arthritis or gout. They should be generally avoiding in large quantities or in too regular usage by anyone.

Any overeating generally, particularly of heavy, sweet or salty food, tends to block the channels, particularly if combined with sedentary life-style.

On the other hand, a light diet and many spices serve to keep the channels clear (but may not properly nourish the heavier tissues like muscle). These include most common spices like ginger, cinnamon, peppermint or sage and more specifically turmeric, cardamom, calamus, camphor (internally in small amounts). Hence these spices can help antidote the channel blocking affect of heavy foods.

Other factors that keep the channels clear include breathing practises (pranayama), proper exercise, fresh air and water, creative mental activity and meditational exercises for clearing the mind. Sweating therapy (svedana), including the use of saunas and steam baths, is also helpful.

CHANNEL DISORDERS

Vata (wind) is responsible for all movements through the channels, though Pitta (bile) and Kapha (phlegm) can cause it to move in various ways.

Blockage of flow involves pain and often the formation of masses or tumors (like chi or blood stagnation in Chinese medicine). Blockage can also lead to infection or inflammation. It often leads to flow out of the proper channel or flow in the wrong direction. Flow in the wrong direction often involves reverse movement in the channels (like vomiting). Flow out of the channel altogether usually involves severe damage to the vessels and often trauma or injury.

Blockage of flow can also result from injuries that have not healed properly. Scar tissue, for example, can block the flow of blood or nerve impulses.

The systems that have clearly defined and easy to observe flow through the channels, like the digestive or urinary systems, can be examined by their products, like the amount of urine for the latter.

The systems that serve more to build up tissues have to be examined more through the kind of tissue they produce. Excess flow will usually be an excess supply of nutrients to the tissue,

deficient flow a deficient supply. Hence they are often linked up with excess and deficient states of the tissues. For example, excess flow of the channels of the blood usually involves excess blood and deficient flow, deficient blood.

Excess flow can also be involved in excess movement of the tissue or an increase in its rate of movement; deficient flow in deficient movement or decreased rate. Excess flow of the channels of the blood in this way may cause palpitations or rapidity of the pulse.

Blockage of flow tends to cause a blockage of movement of the tissue, for example, severe cramping of the muscles.

Wrong flows may lead to each other. Deficient flow may lead to excess flow, or excess flow in one tissue may lead to deficient flow in another, as the body tries to normalize its circulation.

The following are some typical wrong flows through the channels---

1. PRANAVAHA SROTAS/ Respiratory System
   - A. EXCESS FLOW---rapid breathing, hyperventilation
   - B. DEFICIENT FLOW---slow or shallow breathing, shortness of breath
   - C. BLOCKAGE OF FLOW---difficult breathing (dyspnea), cough, wheezing, asthma, hiatal hernia
   - D. FLOW OUT OF PROPER CHANNEL---perforation of the lungs

2. ANNAVAHA SROTAS/ Digestive System
   - A. EXCESS FLOW---excess appetite, hyperacidity (excess digestive secretions), diarrhea
   - B. DEFICIENT FLOW---deficient appetite, hypoacidity (deficient digestive secretions), anorexia, constipation
   - C. BLOCKAGE OF FLOW---intestinal obstruction, tumors
   - D. FLOW OUT OF PROPER CHANNEL---vomiting, perforation of the stomach or intestines (perforated ulcer)

3. AMBHUVAHA SROTAS/ Water Intake system
   - A. EXCESS FLOW---excess hunger, sharp sense of taste, hypoglycemia
   - B. DEFICIENT FLOW---nausea, lack of taste, hyperglycemia
   - C. BLOCKAGE OF FLOW---diabetes, pancreatic cancer
   - D. FLOW OUT OF PROPER CHANNEL---vomiting (watery type), anorexia

4. RASAVAHA SROTAS/ Plasma or Lymphatic System
   - A. EXCESS FLOW---edema (excessive hydration of tissues), swollen glands and lymphatics
   - B. DEFICIENT FLOW---dehydration, emaciation
   - C. BLOCKAGE OF FLOW---severely swollen glands, lymphatic obstruction, lymphatic cancer
   - D. FLOW OUT OF PROPER CHANNEL---bleeding, coughing of blood

5. RAKTAVAHA SROTAS/ Circulatory System
   A. EXCESS FLOW---rapid pulse, palpitations, hypertension
   B. DEFICIENT FLOW---slow pulse, hypotension, varicose veins
   C. BLOCKAGE OF FLOW----arrhythmia (irregular heart beat, heart skipping a beat), enlargement of liver and spleen, blood clots (as in phlebitis), tumors, heart attacks
   D. FLOW OUT OF PROPER CHANNEL---bleeding disorders generally

6. MAMSAVAHA SROTAS/ Muscular System
   A. EXCESS FLOW---muscular hyperactivity, tremors
   B. DEFICIENT FLOW---muscular hypoactivity, spasms, lack of muscle tone
   C. BLOCKAGE OF FLOW---muscle tumors, chronic inflammation of muscle tissue
   D. FLOW OUT OF PROPER CHANNEL---tearing of muscle tissue

7. MEDOVAHA SROTAS/ Adipose System
   A. EXCESS FLOW---edema, obesity
   B. DEFICIENT FLOW---emaciation, dry skin
   C. BLOCKAGE OF FLOW---fat tumors (usually subcutaneous and benign)
   D. FLOW OUT OF PROPER CHANNEL---tearing of adipose tissue

8. ASTHIVAHA SROTAS/ Skeletal System
   A. EXCESS FLOW---excess bone tissue
   B. DEFICIENT FLOW---weak bones, deficient bone tissue, osteoporosis
   C. BLOCKAGE OF FLOW---calcification of bones, bone spurs, bone cancer
   D. FLOW OUT OF PROPER CHANNEL---occurs with breaking of bones

9. MAJJAVAHA SROTAS/ Nervous System
   A. EXCESS FLOW---hypersensitivity, pain, insomnia, tremors, overly sharp perception
   B. DEFICIENT FLOW---hyposensitivity, numbness, dullness, cloudy perception
   C. BLOCKAGE OF FLOW---convulsions, coma, M.S.
   D. FLOW OUT OF PROPER CHANNEL---damage to nerve tissue

10. SHUKRAVAHA SROTAS/ Reproductive System
   A. EXCESS FLOW---spermatorrhea, nocturnal emission, premature ejaculation, leucorrhea
   B. DEFICIENT FLOW---delayed ejaculation, lack of lubrication
   C. BLOCKAGE OF FLOW---inability to ejaculate, swelling of the testes, stones in the prostate, uterine tumors
   D. FLOW OUT OF PROPER CHANNEL---discharge of sperm into the bladder

11. SVEDAVAHA SROTAS/ Sebaceous System
    A. EXCESS FLOW---excess or oily sweating
    B. DEFICIENT FLOW---deficient sweating, stopping of sweating (temporarily)
    C. BLOCKAGE OF FLOW---inability to sweat
    D. FLOW OUT OF PROPER CHANNEL---discharge of sweat into the plasma

12. PURISHAVAHA SROTAS/ Excretory System
    A. EXCESS FLOW---diarrhea
    B. DEFICIENT FLOW---constipation
    C. BLOCKAGE OF FLOW---intestinal obstruction, diverticulitis, tumors in the colon
    D. FLOW OUT OF PROPER CHANNEL---perforation of the large intestine

13. MUTRAVAHA SROTAS/ Urinary System
    A. EXCESS FLOW---excess or frequent urination
    B. DEFICIENT FLOW---scanty urination
    C. BLOCKAGE OF FLOW---difficult or painful urination, urinary obstruction, stones
    D. FLOW OUT OF PROPER CHANNEL---bursting of the bladder

14. ARTAVAVAHA SROTAS/ Menstrual System
    A. EXCESS FLOW---excess menstruation (menorrhagia)
    B. DEFICIENT FLOW---scanty or delayed menstruation
    C. BLOCKAGE OF FLOW---painful menstruation (dysmenorrhea), absence of menstruation (amenorrhea), chlorosis, tumors
    D. FLOW OUT OF PROPER CHANNEL---discharge of the menses into the urine or stool

15. STANYAVAHA SROTAS/ Lactation System
    A. EXCESS FLOW---excess flow of breast milk
    B. DEFICIENT FLOW---deficient flow of breast milk
    C. BLOCKAGE OF FLOW---inability to discharge breast milk, pain and swelling of breasts, mastitis, breast cysts, tumors and cancer
    D. FLOW OUT OF PROPER CHANNEL---injury to the breast

16. MANOVAHA SROTAS/ Mind
    A. EXCESS FLOW---hyperactivity of senses, worry, gossip, anger
    B. DEFICIENT FLOW---dullness of senses, depression, grief
    C. BLOCKAGE OF FLOW---blocked emotions
    D. FLOW OUT OF PROPER CHANNEL---delirium, schizophrenia

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PART I. LESSON 10

STUDY QUESTIONS

Please note that this may be the most difficult or complex lesson in the course. Please be patient with it.

1. Why does oriental medicine view the body as a network of channels?
2. What are the different channel-systems of the body?
3. What are the different types of flow through the channels that can occur?
4. What are some diseases of excess flow through the channels?
5. What are some of the factors that cause impairment of flow through the Respiratory system (Pranavaha Srotas)?
6. What are some of the signs of excess flow through the Reproductive system (Shukravaha Srotas)?
7. How does flow through the mind relate to flow through the channels of the body?

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PART I. LESSON 11

AYURVEDIC ANATOMY AND PHYSIOLOGY 7.
THE ORGANS OF THE BODY

In the Ayurvedic system emphasis is placed on the humors, tissues and systems (doshas, dhatus and srotas). The organs are not as central as, for example, in Chinese medical theory, but naturally they are still very important and are correlated to the same factors of Ayurvedic analysis.

Most central to Ayurvedic thought are the organs of the digestive tract, as these are the sites wherein the humors are produced and accumulate.

THE STOMACH

The stomach is a Kapha organ. It is the mother of the entire body. It is the site of accumulation for Kapha, as it is here that phlegm is produced. It produces mainly Kapha fluids, like the various alkaline secretions of the stomach membrane.

The stomach is damaged by wrong eating habits including over or undereating, bad food combinations, too strong tasting food, particularly food that is too heavy, oily, sweet or salty, food that is too hot or too cold, or eating another meal before the previous one has left the stomach.

The stomach is somewhat sensitive and can be easily upset by emotional factors, like worry and attachment. The stomach, like the mother, manifests our concern about things. Its aggravation manifests as nausea, belching, vomiting, lack of appetite and indigestion.

THE SMALL INTESTINE

The small intestine is a Pitta organ. It is the main site of the digestive fire and the place where Pitta accumulates. It produces mainly acid (Pitta) secretions.

It is damaged mainly by food that is too hot, spicy, sour or greasy, too strong tasting. Mentally it is damaged by emotions such as irritability and anger. Its aggravation manifests as heartburn, hyperacidity or ulcers.

THE LARGE INTESTINE

The large intestine or colon is a Vata organ. It is the site of air and the place where Vata accumulates.

It is disturbed by food that is too cold, dry or light, or insufficient in quantity or bulk, as well as by too much use of laxatives or colonics. Emotionally it is upset by nervousness, anxiety and fear. Its aggravation manifests as gas, distention and constipation.

THE LUNGS

The lungs, which are the basis for the respiratory system, are primarily a Kapha organ. They are sensitive, like moisture and dislike dryness and produce phlegm. As involved with air, being responsible for our intake of energy through the breathing process, they have secondary Vata qualities also and are related to the nervous system in their function.

The lungs are damaged particularly by exposure, especially to cold but also to any other environmental factors like heat, dampness or dryness. Smoking, breathing of dust or air pollution affect them. They are the first organ to be affected by the disease process and the initial stage of diseases, like colds and flu, happens in their sphere. Our resistance to disease is evident by the power of our lungs (and vice versa).

The lungs govern the reception of emotion into the body. Hence they are emotionally sensitive, receptive and easily hurt. They are damaged by grief and sorrow due to attachment (Kapha emotions), which can accumulate and be held in them. Their aggravation appears as phlegm, cough, congestion and difficult breathing.

THE HEART

The heart is primarily a Pitta organ as it is involved with the circulation of the blood, the Pitta tissue in the body. As the seat of emotions like love, however, it also has a Kapha nature.

The heart is damaged by too much exertion, by overwork and overexercise. Emotionally, it is disturbed by too much pleasure and joy, by over-expression or false expression of emotions. Its aggravation manifests as palpitations, variable blood pressure, arrhythmia, heart pains and other circulatory problems.

THE LIVER AND GALL BLADDER

The liver, which is involved with both the digestive and circulatory systems, is primarily a Pitta organ, as is the gall bladder, its organ of secretion.

As involved with sugar and fat metabolism the liver is secondarily a Kapha organ and is involved in many Kapha disorders like obesity and diabetes.

The liver is damaged by Pitta increasing factors like too much spicy food, greasy or sweet food, too much meat, by alcohol and drugs. It is responsible for cleansing the blood and removing toxins, hence it is involved in most infectious or toxic conditions of the body.

The liver is the site of will and negative (outgoing) emotions like anger and hatred. The liver governs the expression of emotion and the assertion of the will. Its aggravation manifests as irritability, headaches, hypertension, skin rashes or infections, liver disorders, hepatitis, jaundice, gall stones and so on. There may be a bitter taste in the mouth or a bilious type vomiting also.

THE PANCREAS AND SPLEEN

The pancreas, as it governs sugar metabolism and in Ayurvedic thought also the digestion of water, is primarily a Kapha organ.

The spleen, as it is involved with the blood formation and destruction, is primarily a Pitta organ. As such it is involved in many blood and liver disorders. Enlargement of liver and spleen goes together in many of these conditions. It is also involved with the immune system through promoting formation of white blood cells etc.

In the Chinese system, the functions of spleen and pancreas are linked together as one organ, called the spleen but rather different in function than the spleen in Western medicine.

The pancreas is damaged by eating too much sweet or rich food, by drinking too much water and by emotional factors such as desire, attachment and sentimentality. Its dysfunction manifests as irregular sugar metabolism, hypoglycemia and diabetes.

The spleen is damaged by most of the same factors as the liver, as well as by traumatic injuries, and also manifests as disorders of the blood, including bleeding disorders and chronic non-healing sores.

THE KIDNEYS AND URINARY BLADDER

The kidneys and urinary bladder, as the organs that eliminate water, are primarily Vata organs. Like the colon they are organs of elimination in the lower part of the body. The urinary system is a generally Vata (drying) function.

The kidneys have secondary Kapha qualities as providing nutrition and hormones for the deeper tissues, like nerves and bones. The kidneys evolve first in the fetus and their proper development is necessary for right growth in the body, particularly bone formation and reproductive function. The kidneys and bladder aid in cleansing the blood, by removing mainly the uric acid from it and thereby help restrain Pitta.

The kidneys are also a sensitive organ and easily damaged by too much travel, exposure to cold, excessive sex, and trauma. Psychologically, they are damaged by Vata emotions like fear and fright.

The urinary bladder is also damaged by too much sex or suppression of the urge to urinate. Their dysfunction manifests as difficult urination, abnormal urination, burning urination, lower back pain and low vitality.

THE REPRODUCTIVE ORGANS

The male reproductive fluid is under the rule of Kapha. It is cold, sweet, wet and sticky. Hence the testes is a Kapha organ.

The female reproductive system is under the rule of Pitta and blood. The menstrual fluid is hot and of the nature of blood. Hence the uterus is a Pitta organ. Yet it also has Kapha qualities, as it produces lubrication and can conceive new life. Its Kapha nature comes out more during pregnancy. The female breasts are Kapha organs, having a fatty nature and producing milk, a Kapha fluid.

Hence the reproductive system is generally Kapha in nature and reproduction is a Kapha function.

However, the polarity of the reproductive system is opposite that of the body as a whole. The male reproductive system has more Kapha qualities, though the male body is more Pitta. The female reproductive system is more Pitta, though her body is more Kapha. This is because sexual desire is the longing for the opposite sex and the capacity for taking into ourselves the energy of the opposite sex. Hence the uterus has a Pitta nature to create a longing for male energy which is fire. The testes has a Kapha nature to create a longing for female energy which is water.

In the sexual act, the energy of fire (Pitta) from the female, her portion of male energy, returns to the male in the form of passion. The energy of water (Kapha) of the male, his portion of female energy, returns to the female in the form of semen. In this way the polarity between the two sexes is temporarily relieved in a state of balance.

The reproductive organs are damaged by too much sex, repression of sex, by poor nutrition and by emotions such as lust and fear. Their aggravation manifests as impotence, infertility, or inability to perform sexually, mainly Vata disorders. For women menstrual problems arise.

THE BRAIN

The brain is primarily a Vata organ as it is the source of the nerve impulses that govern the rest of the body.

The cerebrospinal fluid, however, is Kapha in nature (Tarpak Kapha). It serves to support the Vata function of the brain and nerves.

Factors that damage the brain include external factors in the form of excess sensory stimuli, like too loud noise or music, too bright colors. Too much exposure to the mass media or to computers is another factor, as these also serve as stimulants. Taking of stimulants like coffee, alcohol or any kind of drug are other deranging factors. Internal factors include too much thought, worry, calculation or speculation. Derangement of the brain manifests as insomnia, hallucinations, poor sensory or motor functioning, spasms, tremors, paralysis etc.

THE PERICARDIUM AND TRIPLE WARMER

The pericardium and triple warmer are concepts more important in oriental than western medicine. The pericardium covers the heart and is mainly involved with psychological disorders, delirium and coma. It is like the heart in its nature and derangement, though often represents its more Kapha side.

The triple warmer is not so much an organ as a physiological process mainly concerned with the water metabolism and its channels. Hence it is mainly a Kapha organ.

ORGANS AND THE HUMORS

VATA-----large intestine, urinary bladder, kidney, brain
PITTA----small intestine, liver, gall bladder, spleen, heart, uterus
KAPHA---stomach, lungs, pancreas, testes

Vata governs mainly the organs of elimination, which show the lower function of Vata, and the brain, which shows its higher function.

Pitta governs mainly organs of digestion and of the circulatory system (the blood).

Kapha governs organs that produce phlegm or other body fluids.

Diseases of the organs are usually owing to the humor that predominates in them.

Generally, however, Vata governs the function of all the organs, as it enervates them. Pitta governs the metabolism in all organs. Kapha maintains the substance of all organs. Deranged function of organs usually relates to Vata; poor digestion or imbalanced metabolism within them to Pitta; and excess tissue development in them to Kapha. Hyperfunction, excess Vata, leads to hypo-substance, deficient Kapha. Hypofunction, deficient Vata, leads to hyper-substance, excess Kapha.

ORGANS AND THE TISSUES

The plasma is mainly governed by the lungs and heart. These organs are responsible for its distribution. It is produced by the stomach and lungs.

The blood is governed by the heart, liver and spleen. The heart is responsible for its circulation. The liver stores the blood and the spleen is responsible for its destruction.

The muscle is governed by the liver and spleen/pancreas which aid in its production.

Fat is governed by the pancreas and kidneys as part of the water metabolism.

Bone is governed by the colon and kidneys. The colon nourishes the bones.

Marrow is governed by the brain and colon, the latter which nourishes the marrow through the bones.

Semen is governed by the testes, ovaries and kidneys.

The organs are also mirrored in the tissues they govern and their function can be read in the condition of that tissue.

ORGANS AND CHANNEL SYSTEMS CORRESPONDENCE

1. Pranavaha srotas, the Respiratory system, relates to the lungs and heart.
2. Annavaha srotas, the Digestive system, to the stomach and small intestine.
3. Ambhuvaha srotas, the Water Metabolism system, to the pancreas and, secondarily, kidneys.

4. Rasavaha srotas, the Lymphatic system, to the lungs, heart and stomach.
5. Raktavaha srotas, the Circulatory system to the heart.
6. Mamsavaha srotas, the Muscular system, to the liver and spleen.
7. Medovaha srotas, the Adipose system, to the pancreas and kidneys.
8. Asthivaha srotas, the Skeletal system, to the colon.
9. Majjavaha srotas, the Nervous system, to the brain.
10. Shukravaha srotas, the Reproductive system, to the testes and ovaries.

11. Svedavaha srotas, the Sebaceous system, to the lungs.
12. Purishavaha srotas, the Excretory system, to the colon.
13. Mutravaha srotas, the Urinary system, to the bladder.

14. Artavavaha srotas, the Menstrual system, to the uterus.
15. Stanyavaha srotas, the Lactation system, to the breast.

Hence the organs can be diagnosed by the channels that relate to them. Dysfunctions of the channel-system will be mirrored in their respective organs.

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THE TEN RESORTS OF LIFE

Ten important sites in the body are recognized in Ayurveda as key to health. These are the two temples, the three main vital organs (heart, bladder and head), the throat, the blood, semen, Ojas and rectum.

Some are sensitive areas, damage to which can cause death, like a blow to the temple, head or chest (heart), breaking the neck or cutting the throat. Others are sensitive tissues, like blood, semen or Ojas, loss of which causes devitalization and death. Others are important organs whose dysfunction leads to devitalization and death, like the head (brain), heart, bladder and rectum. When the bladder does not function properly the tissues become toxic. The same is true to a lesser extent when the colon fails.

Problems with these areas in the body can indicate long term problems with vitality.

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NON-SUPPRESSION OF NATURAL URGES

As we see, one of the main causes of disruption of the channels, one of the main factors of disease in general, is blockage of flow through the channels. This is something that we can do to ourselves by suppressing or inhibiting the normal functions of the channels.

Each channel has its purpose. No flow in any of them is wrong or to be suppressed. To suppress any has an unbalancing affect on all and deranges the life-force. The product that should be discharged is forced to stay in the body and the natural urge to expel it is suppressed and driven backwards. This not only causes the suppressed function to be weakened but causes the whole nervous system to be disturbed, as the nerve energy behind the impulse must be discharged elsewhere. It may cause a flow in the wrong direction or out of the channel altogether. Hence suppression of natural urges tends to derange Vata.

For this reason, in Ayurveda all natural urges are not to be suppressed. Thirteen of these are recognized. They are the urges towards:

1. urination, 2. excretion, 3. ejaculation, 4. farting, 5. vomiting, 6. sneezing, 7. belching, 8. yawning, 9. eating, 10. drinking, 11. crying, 12. sleep, and 13. breathing

SIDE-EFFECTS OF SUPPRESSION OF NATURAL URGES

1. Suppression of the urge to urinate deranges the kidneys and the urinary system. It causes difficult or painful urination, pain in the bladder, lower back ache and headache.

2. Suppression or withholding of the urge to defecate deranges the colon, the excretory and digestive systems. It causes constipation, abdominal pain and distention, headache and muscle cramps.

3. Suppression of the urge to ejaculate damages the reproductive and urinary systems. It causes pain in the penis and testes, swelling of the prostate, difficult urination, cardiac pain, malaise and insomnia.

4. Suppression of the urge to fart causes constipation, difficult urination, abdominal pain and distention and various Vata disorders. The retained waste air is absorbed into the bone and marrow, where it can aggravate arthritic or nervous disorders. Hence it not only deranges the digestive system but aggravates the Vata in the entire body.

5. Suppression of the urge to vomit causes nausea, anorexia, edema, anemia, fever and skin diseases. It tends to damage the water intake system (Ambhuvaha srotas).

6. Suppression of the urge to sneeze causes headache, facial nerve pain or numbness and weakness of the sense organs. It often damages the lungs and respiratory system and increases allergic reactions.

7. Suppression of the urge to belch causes hiccup, anorexia, difficult breathing and palpitations. Suppression of cough is included here. Both respiratory and digestive systems can be deranged in a significant way.

8. Suppression of the urge to yawn causes tremors, numbness, convulsions and insomnia. It mainly aggravates Vata and the nervous system.

9. Suppression of the urge to eat causes lack of appetite, poor digestion, malabsorption and light headedness. It deranges the whole body and the mind through the digestive system and may bring about suppression of the digestive fire.

10. Suppression of the urge to drink causes dryness, deafness, fatigue and heart pain. It deranges the water system and upsets the vitality and may cause dry skin or dehydration.

11. Suppression of the urge to cry causes eye diseases, allergies, light headedness and heart diseases. It often involves suppression of emotions as well.

12. Suppression of the urge to sleep causes insomnia, fatigue, headache and heaviness in the eyes. It deranges the nervous system and mind, particularly Vata.

13. Suppressing the urge to breathe causes cough, asthma, difficult or shallow breathing, lack of strength and heart diseases.

It often happens when we are disturbed or afraid and we may not notice it. Hence conscious breathing can correct may emotional conditions.

Various forms of Vata are deranged in each instance. These are listed as follows:

Suppression of excretion, urination or ejaculation all derange Apana Vayu, the downward moving air.

Suppression of eating and drinking deranges Agni and Samana Vayu.

Suppression of sleep, inhalation, sneezing or yawning deranges Prana, the primary life-force in the body.

Suppression of exhalation, belching, vomiting or coughing deranges Udana, the upward moving air.

Suppression of crying deranges Vyana.

This non-suppression of natural urges is quite different than indulging in them. Over-promoting them through factors like excess eating, drinking or sex, is equally imbalancing. To force a function when there is no natural urge, like to eat when not hungry, can also be deranging, particularly to Vata.

Following nature and moderation always go together. What is natural is never extreme. To attend to an urge is not the same as to cater to it. Once our tastes and senses are overstimulated it is hard to restore them to a state of balance and we can come to crave the very things that aggravate our condition further.

NON-SUPPRESSION OF EMOTIONS

Emotions also represent various impulses in the mind. They should not be suppressed either or they will imbalance the mind. Their energy will be driven inward and promote a greater unconsciousness in ourselves. They will accumulate in the subconscious and cause anxiety, malaise and lack of peace.

Suppressed emotions will also tend to block the channels of the physical body and may cause disruption of circulation, pain, allow for toxins to build up, or promote the formation of tumors.

Blocked emotional energy has to come out somewhere also. If we do not express it, it will come out on a physical level. Suppressed emotions are behind many diseases. They also are involved with poor immune function. Many emotions, like fear or anger, are part of immune responses to avoid or repel danger. When they are suppressed, the immune function is depressed as well. Suppression of emotions also weakens the digestive fire and toxins tend to build up in the tissues. Such immune system disorders like allergies, arthritis or cancer are usually based upon suppressed emotions.

Signs of emotional blockage include insomnia, bad dreams, irritability, fear, depression and shifting of moods. On a physical level, there will be lack of appetite, nausea or indigestion and pain or tension in the area of the liver, as the liver governs expression of emotion. For women suppressed emotions tend to come out premenstrually.

We should acknowledge and express emotions as they arise. This does not mean that we should indulge in them either or over-express them. Hence if we are angry about something we should communicate it as objectively as possible. This does not mean to shout out in rage but that we must express our inability to accept the situation. Otherwise our fear of self-expression will suppress our anger and it will be directed against ourselves.

*It is only because emotions are suppressed that they become * forceful or violent. Emotion is originally usually a gentle energy, a sense of hurt or disturbance. At its incipience is where we have the power to control it. The only way to control emotions is through learning to observe them, both in ourselves and in others. Both suppression and over-expression are forms of non-observation. More about this will be discussed later in the course.

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PART I. LESSON 11

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What organs relate primarily to Vata in their functioning?
2. What organs relate primarily to Pitta?
3. What organs relate primarily to Kapha?
4. How does the liver function in Ayurvedic terms?
5. How does the kidney function?

6. How does the lung function?
7. What is the role of Vata in all organ functioning?
8. What are the ten resorts of life?
9. Why should natural urges not be suppressed?
10. What are some of the physical ramifications of suppressed emotions?

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PART I. APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1.
A SUMMARY VIEW OF MEDICAL SYSTEMS
From the Ayurvedic Standpoint

As Ayurvedic practitioners we should be able to state the case of our medical and healing approach versus those others available, particularly relative to modern allopathic medicine, which dominates the world medical field today. To allow you to state the case of Ayurveda, I have included its perspective on healing. It is good to have this knowledge at an early stage in one's study. There are no questions in the final text given on this material.

Below we outline the different medical systems according to an Ayurvedic understanding.

1. MODERN BIOCHEMICAL MEDICINE

Modern medicine is according to a medical model that is inert, inorganic, materialistic, mechanical, which is only considers the physical body and treats the mind as a physical entity.

Biochemical medicine emphasizes the use of inorganic substances (drugs), mechanical testing, invasive treatment methods like surgery and a passive approach by the patient, wherein the therapy is usually applied without changes of life-style or awareness. It is based on dissection or study of the dead body and identifying the visible forms in the disease process.

While most sophisticated in methods and information of all healing systems it is the crudest form of medicine in terms of treatment (ie. fixing the body like repairing a machine). Its complexity merely reflects complexity and superficiality of physical forces and the incapacity to judge life conditions by merely chemical considerations.

2. NATUROPATHIC MEDICINE

Its method is organic, naturalistic, energetic, based upon a recognition of the life-force and its role guiding biochemical processes. It emphasizes the harmonization of the life-force through natural substances like herbs, food, diet and exercise. It often considers life-style and may consider psychological conditions.

We can also call this ENERGETIC MEDICINE as it is not concerned with the biochemical constituents of substances but their energetic effect upon the life-force. It deals with the general energy imbalances rather than the particular pathogens.

A> QUANTITATIVE ENERGETICS:

As the basic form of naturopathic medicine, this approach considers not only the physical but the vital (the life-force, chi or prana) and what may be good for balance of its qualities and energies. Hence it prescribes hot substances for cold conditions, strong substances for weak conditions etc.

However it considers these energetics on an outward or quantitative level only. For example, it may hold that meat is good for strength, as it provides energy (it balances the condition on a gross level). This point of view does not consider that meat is also deranging or dulling to the mind, emotions and senses, as this approach is not concerned with these inner or spiritual affects.

B> QUALITATIVE ENERGETICS

This is the more complete system of healing that considers also the spiritual factors in the disease process and the spiritual qualities inherent in natural substances (for example, the three gunas of system of yoga).

From its standpoint, for example, meat though good for strength on an outward level is bad for the mind, or bad on an inner level generally. It creates bad karma and upsets the life-force as its energy is basically dead. Hence this approach does not recommend substances or actions which may balance the life-force but derange the mind.

A CRITIQUE OF CHINESE MEDICINE TODAY

In this regard, Traditional Chinese Medicine as coming through mainland China today is naturalistic and energetic but follows a quantitative model because of the materialistic, intellectual, communist culture which is interpreting it.

Rajasic and tamasic, disturbing and dulling substances are used (generally uncritically) like meat, fish, eggs, insect parts, unprepared minerals. The doctors themselves may drink, smoke, and otherwise engage in rajasic or tamasic life-styles.

Taoist and Buddhist Chinese medicine have a qualitative side and can be used to supplement Modern Chinese medicine in this regard. Yet these systems lack a simple method of approach to this issue like the three gunas. This concept, however, can be integrated into them.

Hence no matter how sophisticated Chinese medicine becomes in terms of herbal, acupuncture or dietary treatment, as long as it does not use a qualitative model, like the three gunas of Yoga and

Ayurveda, it remains incomplete and superficial. It has the same problems as modern biochemical medicine, it lacks the qualitative dimension of consciousness. While it recognizes the life-force, it does not consider the energy of consciousness from which the life-force comes and through which alone it can be harmonized.

THE SPIRITUAL SIDE OF NATURE'S HEALING ENERGY

Ayurvedic-Yogic medicine considers the higher energetic and this is its special focus (though like Chinese medicine under the influence of modern medicine and culture there is the tendency to lose sight of this by some Ayurvedic practitioners).

Naturalistic medicine is not complete without taking into consideration Nature's movement towards the development of consciousness, as all life as yoga. Naturalistic medicine does not mean just employing the substances of nature on a gross level. It means recognizing the intelligence inherent in nature and using the substances of nature in a qualitative and conscious manner. This requires connecting with the force of nature on an inner level. The inner force of nature is the Yoga Shakti or power of yoga, the energy that seeks the unfoldment of consciousness.

VIEWPOINTS OF THE SYSTEMS

From the standpoint of a biochemical medicine, naturalistic medicines are naive as they do not seek detail or expansion on the biochemical level. They do not have the sophistication of equipment, testing and information that biochemical medicine considers essential.

From the standpoint of naturalistic medicine, biochemical medicine is naive because it does not consider the primary thing in health and disease, the life-force (it is one-dimensional rather than two-dimensional). Hence the sophistication of biochemical medicine appears negative; an over focusing on one level or excess detail in the superficial that misses the truth. This is like seeking more and more detail about treating the feet, while overlooking the rest of the body.

From the standpoint of quantitative energetic systems of naturalistic medicine, qualitative systems like yogic medicine may be naive because they do not seek detail or expansion on the level of outer qualities. Yogic medicine generally recommends vegetarianism which systems like Chinese medicine may consider to be unhealthy, particularly for deficient or weak types and many chronic and wasting diseases. They may consider that yogic medicine is sacrificing health to some ideal or belief.

Yogic medicine may trace disease to simple imbalances in the mind rather than to complex imbalances in the life-force. This is



like how naturalistic medicine may trace disease to simple imbalances in the life-force rather than complex biochemical disorders.

From the standpoint of yogic medicine regular quantitative naturalistic medicine is naive because it does not consider the quality of the mind and consciousness, the real primary thing in health and disease, physical and spiritual (yogic medicine is three-dimensional rather than one or two dimensional). The sophistication of naturalistic treatments may be overly complex or detailed by ignoring this primary factor. The complex diagnoses and complex treatments of Chinese medicine using many acupuncture points and dozens of herbs may be seen as less direct and effective than a few simple meditation practices.

The rule we recognize in Yoga and Ayurveda, to repeat it again, is that the inner levels of treatment are always more important than the outer. They are also more universal and less complex but require a more active role and participation on the part of the patient. They require change of life-style and thought and the adaptation of some spiritual practice, which rests upon awakening some spiritual aspiration or consciousness of the soul, our eternal being and eternal purpose in incarnation.

Hence we can use the biochemical model on a gross, outer level. We can adapt any naturalistic approaches for dealing with the life-force. But primarily we must address the needs of consciousness and the spiritual evolution on earth. Only a medicine that does this can be considered to be truly holistic. Otherwise it leaves out the real man (our eternal soul) and merely gives energy to our transient body and ego.

In this regard medicine requires a spiritual-ethical foundation. If we practice medicine seeking money or fame or promoting a materialistic, mechanical or non-spiritual view of the world, or we practice medicine in such a way that we take power over others and do not make them responsible for their own lives, our medicine is spiritually retarded. While it may help on an outer level, inwardly it promotes decay and it cannot truly serve the higher forces of evolution on earth.

The real issue is not how complex our knowledge or treatment is on either a biochemical or naturalistic basis. It is how much we connect the patient with their own life-energy and the spiritual intelligence behind it. This often requires simplicity and a return of responsibility to the patient. Such simplicity is not a sign of lack of insight but of going to the core.

QUANTITATIVE VERSUS QUALITATIVE MEDICINE

Ayurveda, the traditional medicine of India, is allied with the system of Yoga that aims at the evolution of consciousness. As such, it is a radically different concept of medicine than that of modern biomedicine or allopathy. To what extent can they come together? To what extent can we compare them and find one more useful in some conditions than the other? Under what standards can we test them relative to each other? Does one have to be demeaned or limited in order to enter into a dialogue with the other?

Ayurvedic medicine is based on certain spiritual or religious values which are not part of the system of modern biomedicine. According to these values more important than health or longevity is the attainment of a higher state of consciousness. This state of consciousness is defined as peace, union with the Divine or realization of the true Self. Yoga defines it as "the silencing of the mind" (yogashchitta vrtti nirodah YOGA SUTRAS I.2).

While these two factors are not exclusive, they are not always inclusive and one can be gained without the other. Particularly, physical health may be attained without any spiritual development. From the spiritual standpoint of Ayurveda a great yogi who dies young has a more fruitful life than an ordinary man who lives a hundred years. On the other hand, Ayurveda holds that better health and spiritual development tend to go together. What relieves tension or contraction in the mind aids in the well being of the body.

Ayurveda does not aim at simply curing diseases or prolonging life. It sees these as a means to an end but not the end in itself. It is also concerned with improving the quality of our life. In this regard it considers right life-style based upon right understanding of our individual constitution more important than the treatment of disease. In its perspective quality is not in how much we make, or how much we have, not even the degree of our knowledge. These are quantities that we possess but do not of themselves alter who we really are, which is the nature of our own consciousness. Ayurveda, as part of the science of Yoga, recognizes the quality of our state of awareness as the real index of the quality of our lives.

Modern biomedicine regards any such quality judgments as unscientific or outside the field of medicine. It places them in the realm of religion and may regard them as cultural or personal in origin and, as possibly biased. It measures health in terms of the curing of disease, extension of longevity and, perhaps, improvement of work performance. It sees these as practical issues that should be measured on a purely physical level, free of the religious biases of any culture.

There is modern psychology as well. It aims at emotional balance in the individual, mainly the individual's capacity to function normally in society. Ayurvedic and yogic psychology, however, is quite different. It aims at eradicating the separative consciousness or ego into the state of pure awareness. It has a qualitative dimension and an existential orientation that goes far beyond the limits of psychology. It recognizes other planes of existence than the physical and the influence of forces and entities of those planes on human diseases, both physical and mental. It sees all of our societies as more or less diseased as all are limited to the ultimately destructive drives of the ego.

This qualitative side of Ayurveda is best revealed in its system of the three gunas. It views all life as composed of three basic qualities; one of darkness and ignorance (tamas), the second of turbulence and illusion (rajas) and the third of peace and truth (sattva). Its aim is to help us attain the state of sattva. As such Ayurveda notes the effect of foods, medicines and other factors according to these three qualities. One can live a long time in ignorance and illusion, though they breed more diseases than peace and truth.

For this reason, the value of many Ayurvedic practices may not show up in any quantitative studies of disease or longevity. We would have to include some system of measuring or gauging the state of the mind or consciousness.

Any comparative study of biomedicine and Ayurveda is usually confined the realm of quantity. It is much easier to examine outer physical conditions than to determine the quality of our awareness. This, however, does not reach the heart of Ayurveda. For example, meat may provide more gross nutrition and give more crude physical energy than other foods. But according to Yoga and Ayurveda it is inferior in that it blocks the development of higher consciousness and brings a karma or energy of death and violence into the human psyche.

Studies tend to be quantitative. A certain standard of measurement is created, a statistical study is done and the results tend to prove or disprove something. Truth, however, is a matter of quality. One can measure our various organ functions but the degree of truth to which our lives are lived cannot be arrived at through any system of measurement.

Hence Ayurveda tells us that our health and longevity is not the highest thing. It should not be an end in itself but part of a life that aims that the unfoldment of the deeper aspects of our mind, which transcend time and space. Nor should our human well-being be stressed to the detriment of the life around us, as when we eat meat or otherwise harm the lives of other living beings to promote our own health.

Naturally it is very difficult to judge systems based on quality. They have certain value judgments that may not be acceptable to everyone. On the other hand, if we remove value judgments from medicine we reduce human beings to the level of machines and health to mechanical performance.

It will take some time, no doubt centuries, before the human race comes to any understanding and agreement on values. It is certainly easier to measure the weather than to determine what are humane values.

It is quite possible for Ayurveda and modern medicine to come together on specific and limited issues--how to treat this or that disease, for example, but the range is narrow.

Though they are both medical systems they are not of the same nature. Ayurveda considers the subtler realms of consciousness and gives them priority over the physical. Hence we cannot view them as alternative ways of doing the same thing.

A true dialogue between them is not possible unless Ayurveda is reduced to its physical dimension like biomedicine, or unless biomedicine expands its view of reality to include life and the soul and the factors of the development of consciousness. Along the second line biomedicine could examine to what extent meditation affects our physical nature, yet even this may be rather superficial.

Ayurveda would say that the success of a medical system is a composite of how it improves health and longevity, along with how it raises the moral and ethical stature of the culture and aids in the unfoldment of cosmic consciousness. Biomedicine does have a kind of ethical foundation, a humanistic orientation but not a cosmic or spiritual orientation, nor does modern psychology. They may develop these but it will require recognition of certain inner realities, like the life-force or the soul, which they do not yet acknowledge.

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PART I. APPENDIX 2

GLOSSARY

SECTION 1
ENUMERATION OF PRINCIPLES/ A KEY TO LEARNING AYURVEDA

Many of the principles of Ayurveda come in groups. These allow memorization for easy reference.

Vedic learning has always emphasized memorization rather than relying on books. This is because what is remembered can become the basis for further creative thinking and correlation in our own minds, not because it is regarded as an end in itself to have a lot of stored information in the brain. What is merely kept as reference in books will not become part of our own being or a basis for our own thought and will tend to make us use it in a mechanical fashion. The real book of Ayurveda is in our own creative vision of life.

These principles also allow us to restructure our thinking process along Ayurvedic terms. So rather than approach them as a tedious process of learning, turn them into a game of cosmic mathematics for understanding the play of life. See how many different kinds of correlations you can make between them and notice how this will make Ayurveda more stimulating and enjoy;able for you.

Most of these come from the first part of this course. Others will be described later, so this section will be useful as reference throughout the course.

1.

Brahman, the Absolute Reality or Pure Being
Atman, the inner Self
Purusha, Spirit

2.

Purusha and Prakriti, Spirit and Matter
Brahman and Maya, Reality and its creative force
Shiva/Shakti, the two in one, God/Goddess reality
The two types of disease, endogenous and exogenous
The two sites of disease, body and mind
The two causes of diseases; our own action and external forces
The two types of energetic effect (virya) of substances; hot and cold

3.

The three gunas or qualities of Prakriti of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas
The three biological humors, Tridosha, of Vata, Pitta and Kapha
The three mental forms of the humors, Prana, Tejas and Ojas
The three malas or waste materials of feces, urine and sweat

The three states of the Koshta or digestive tract showing the ease of elimination through the colon; difficult for Vata, moderate for Kapha, mild for Pitta
The three conditions of the humors; increasing, provoked, alleviated
The three kinds of substances; those which provoke, alleviate or harmonize the humors

The three states of consciousness as waking, dream and deep sleep
The three stages of life as youth, middle and old age
The three forms of knowledge; direct perception, inference and revelation
The three types of action (karma); by body, speech and mind
The three forms of suffering, that caused by ourselves (adhyatmic), that owing to the elements (adhibhutic) and that caused by cosmic powers (adhidaivic)

The three methods of diagnosis; observation, touch and questioning
The three kinds of post-digestive effects for herbs and food; sweet, sour and pungent
The three kinds of disease; those owing to the humors, those owing to karma, and those owing to both

4.

The four levels of the mind (antahkarana, inner organ) as memory (chitta), thought (manas), ego (ahamkara) and determination (buddhi)
The four Vedas; the Rig, Sama, Yajur and Atharva
The four goals of life; enjoyment, wealth, career, liberation (kama, artha, dharma and moksha)
The four levels of society, spiritual (Brahmin), political (Kshatriya), business (Vaishya) and labor (Shudra)

The four states of the digestive fire (agni) as high, low, variable and balanced
The four quarters of healing; the doctor, the medicine, the nurse and the patient
The four types of diseases; easy to cure, hard to cure, incurable but palliatable, and untreatable
The four types of wrong flow through the channels; excess, deficient, blockage of flow and flow out of the proper channel

5.

The five Tanmatras of prime qualities of smell, taste, sight, touch and sound
The five elements (pancha mahabhutani) of earth, water, fire, air and ether
The five sense organs (pancha jnanendriya) of the nose, tongue, eyes, skin and ears
The five organs of action (pancha karmendriya) of anus, penis, feet, hands and mouth
The five sheaths of food (anna), breath (prana), mind (manas), intelligence (vijnana) and bliss (ananda)

The five forms of Vata as Prana, Udana, Samana, Vyana and Apana
The five forms of Pitta as Sadhak, Alochak, Pachak, Bhrajak and Ranjak
The five forms of Kapha as Tarpak, Bodhak, Kledak, Sleshak and Avalambak

The five cleansing actions (Pancha Karma) of Ayurveda; emesis, purgation, enemas, nasal therapy, release of toxic blood
The five Yamas or right attitudes of Yogic practice of non-violence, truthfulness, control of sexual energy, non-stealing and non-clinging
The five Niyamas, right actions or observances of Yogic practice of self-study, purity, contentment, self-discipline and surrender to God
The five mental activities of right knowledge, wrong knowledge, imagination, sleep and memory

6.

The six tastes of sweet, sour, salty, pungent, bitter and astringent

The six stages of disease; accumulation, provocation, overflow, relocation, manifestation and differentiation

7.

The seven levels of the cosmos with the principles of the five sheaths plus consciousness (chit) and being (sat)
The seven chakras or centers of the subtle body, the root, sex, navel, heart, throat, third eye and head

The seven Dhatus or tissue elements of the body of plasma (rasa), blood (rakta), muscle (mamsa), fat (medas), bone (asthi), marrow (majja) and semen (shukra)
The seven Upadhatus or secondary tissue elements of menstruation and breast milk, veins, tendons, teeth, sclerotic fluid and Ojas

The seven Dhatu waste materials of Kapha, Pitta, waste material in the outer cavities, sweat, hair and nails, tears, and smegma

The seven Dhatu Kalas or nutritional membranes for the seven tissues

The seven constitutions; Vata, Pitta, Kapha, Vata-Pitta, Vata-Kapha, Kapha-Pitta, Vata-Pitta-Kapha

8.

The eight branches of Ayurveda, internal medicine, head and neck diseases, surgery, treatment of poisoning, pediatrics, rejuvenation, aphrodisiacs, and psychology

The eight limbs (ashtanga) of Yoga of yama (right attitudes), niyama (right actions), asana (posture), pranayama (breath control), pratyahara (control of the senses), dharana (control of the mind), dhyana (meditation) and samadhi (absorption)

The eight difficult constitutions (ashta nindita); those who are too tall, too short, have too much or too little body hair, are too dark or too light in complexion, and those who are too heavy in weight or too emaciated

9.

The nine orifices of the body; two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, mouth, urethra and anus

10.

The ten resorts of life; two temples, brain, throat, heart, bladder, blood, semen, Ojas and rectum.

14.

The fourteen srotas or channel systems in the male; the channels that carry breath, food, water, plasma, blood, muscle, fat, bone, marrow, semen, sweat, feces and urine, and the mind

16.

The sixteen srotas or channel systems in the female; the fourteen of the male plus the channels that carry menstruation and breast milk

20.

The twenty attributes of hot/cold, wet/dry, heavy/light, gross/subtle, static/mobile, sharp/dull, solid/liquid, smooth/rough, soft/hard, clear/cloudy

24.

The twenty four principles (tattvas) of Nature (prakriti) of Prakriti, Mahat, Ahamkara, Manas, the five tanmatras, the five sense organs, the five organs of action and the five elements

25.

The twenty five principles (tattva) of existence; the twenty four plus the Purusha (the observer)

GLOSSARY, SECTION 2

SANSKRIT TERMS

While some may find Sanskrit terms difficult, it should be remembered that adequate English equivalents often do not exist. Also as Sanskrit is a language based firmly on etymology, we can understand more about the meaning of these terms by examining the roots from which they derive. Even the study of Chinese medicine involves learning a similar amount of Chinese terms or Western medicine Latin terms.

These are the main Ayurvedic terms for the glossary of the entire course of which only the most commonly used need be known by the student.

Abhimana-------conceit
Abhinivesha----clinging to life
Adhyavasaya----determination, ascertainment
Agni-----------fire, particularly the digestive fire (jathar agni)
Ahankara-------ego
Ahimsa---------non-violence
Ana Chakra----center of command, third eye
Alochak Pitta--form of Pitta governing vision
Ama------------toxic material caused by poor digestion
Amla-----------sour taste
Ananda---------bliss
Anna-----------food
Antahkarana----inner organ (the mind)
Antar Marga----inner disease pathway (digestive tract)
Anutva---------atomic
Apana----------downward moving of the five breaths
Artava---------menstrual fluid
Artha----------goal of wealth or possessions
Asana----------yoga postures
Asmita---------egoism

Asthi----------bone
Atman----------inner Self
Avalambak Kapha/form of Kapha in the chest
Avidya---------ignorance
Ayurveda-------the spiritual science of life (a supplement to the Vedas or Vedanga)

Basti----------enema therapy (also means bladder)
Bahya Marga----outer disease pathway (skin and blood)
Bhagavad Gita--teaching of Krishna
Bhakti Yoga----yoga of devotion
Bhishak--------Ayurvedic doctor
Bhrajak Pitta--form of Pitta governing the complexion
Bhuta----------element

Bhutagni-------digestive fire governing an element
Bodhak Kapha---form of Kapha giving sense of taste
Brahmacharya---control of sexual energy
Brahman--------spiritual reality, the Absolute
Brahmana-------a Brahmin or man of spiritual values
Brimhana-------tonification therapy
Buddhi---------intelligence, principle of discrimination

Chakra---------spinal center
Chala----------changeable, agitated
Chikitsa-------therapy (giving care to)
Chit-----------consciousness
Chitta---------unconscious mind

Daiva Chikitsa/spiritual therapy
Dharana--------concentration, attention
Dharma---------goal of power or prestige; law of one's nature
Dhatu----------tissue element of the body, seven total
Dhyana---------meditation
Dvesha---------repulsion

Gati-----------quality of pulse
Gunas----------attributes, prime qualities of nature
Guru-----------spiritual teacher

Jiva-----------individual soul
Jnana Yoga-----yoga of knowledge
Jyotish--------Vedic astrology

Kala-----------nutritional membrane for the tissues
Kama-----------desire
Kapha----------biological water humor
Karma----------bondage to action, the cause of rebirth

Karma Yoga-----yoga of service
Kashaya--------astringent taste
Katu-----------pungent or spicy taste
Kledak Kapha---form of Kapha governing digestion
Kshatriya------man of political values

Langhana-------reducing therapy

Madhyama Marga/middle disease pathway (deep tissue)
Majja----------bone marrow and nerve tissue
Mala-----------waste material of the body, three total
Mamsa----------muscle
Manas----------mind as principle of thought
Mantra---------words of power or sacred sounds
Marga----------pathway
Marma----------vital points on the body
Maya-----------illusion, cosmic creative power
Medas----------fat
Mutra----------urine

Nadi-----------Ayurvedic name for pulse
Nasya----------nasal administration of therapies
Nirama---------condition of humors without products of indigestion
Niyama---------right actions or observances in yoga practice

Ojas-----------primary energy reserve of body and mind

Pachak Pitta---form of Pitta governing digestion
Pancha Karma---five cleansing actions, vomiting, enemas, purgation, blood-letting and nasal medications
Pariksha-------examination, diagnosis
Pitta----------biological fire humor
Prabhava-------special action of herbs
Prajnaparadha--failure of wisdom or intelligence
Prakriti-------Primal Nature, natural state, constitution
Prana----------1. Life force or breath in general, 2. mental form of the life force, 3. inward moving of the five breaths or life force in the head
Pranayama------breath control
Pratyahara-----control of senses and mind
Purisha--------feces
Purusha--------the Original Spirit or inner Self

Raga-----------attraction
Rajas----------the intermediate principle of energy of the three qualities of nature (prakriti)
Rajasic--------having the nature of Rajas
Rakta----------blood

Rakta Moksha---therapeutic blood-letting
Ranjak Pitta---form of Pitta coloring the blood
Rasa-----------1. plasma, 2. taste
Roga-----------disease

Sadhaka Pitta--form of pitta governing the brain
Sama-----------condition of humors with products of indigestion
Samana---------equalizing form of the five breaths
Samkalpa-------conception
Sankhya--------the system of Indian philosophy enumerating the main principles of cosmic evolution used by all systems
Sat------------being, reality
Sattva---------the higher principle of harmony of the three qualities of nature (prakriti)
Sattvic--------having the nature of sattva
Satya----------truth
Shakti---------power, power of consciousness
Shamana--------palliation therapy
Shiva----------pure being or pure consciousness
Shodhana-------purification therapy
Shudra---------man of sensate values
Shukra---------semen, reproductive fluid
Siddhi---------psychic power
Sleshak Kapha--form of Kapha lubricating the joints
Sleshma--------another name for Kapha or phlegm
Snehana--------oleation therapy, oil massage
Soma-----------bliss or pleasure principle at work behind mind and senses, the experientiable
Srotas---------the different channel systems or physiological systems; Sanskrit plural is srotamsi
Sutra----------axiom, used in Vedic teaching
Sveda----------sweat
Svedana--------steam or sweating therapy

Tamas----------the lower principle of inertia of the three qualities of nature (prakriti)
Tamasic--------having the nature of tamas
Tanmatra-------five prime sensory principle (sound, touch, sight, taste and smell) behind organs and elements
Tantra---------medieval yoga traditions emphasizing use of form
Tapas----------discipline, self-discipline
Tarpak Kapha---form of Kapha governing the brain and nerves
Tattva---------principle of cosmic evolution (24 total)
Tejas----------mental fire
Tikta----------bitter taste

Udana----------upward moving of the five breaths
Upadhatu-------secondary tissue-element of the body
Upanishads-----ancient Vedantic scriptures of India

Vaidya---------Ayurvedic doctor
Vaishya--------man of commercial values
Vamana---------therapeutic vomiting
Vata-----------biological air humor
Vayu-----------another name for Vata
Vedas----------books of knowledge presenting the spiritual science of awareness
Vedanta--------culmination of the Vedas in the philosophy of Self-realization
Vijnana--------intelligence
Vikara---------diversification, disease
Vikriti--------disease state, diversification or deviation from nature
Vipak----------post digestive effect of herbs
Virechana------purgation therapy
Virya----------energetic effect of herbs
Vyana----------outward moving of the five breaths

Yama-----------right attitudes in yoga practice
Yoga-----------psycho-physical practises aimed at Self-knowledge

*****

GLOSSARY SECTION 3

BIBLIOGRAPHY

This is the bibliography for the entire course so that those who wish to do further study along with the course can do so.

Most of these books are available in this country. Generally, books published in India have become expensive. Most are still hard to read.

For the course we recommend AYURVEDA: THE SCIENCE OF SELF-HEALING (by Dr. Vasant Lad), mainly for part I., THE YOGA OF HERBS and AYURVEDIC HEALING, A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE, mainly for Part III.

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AYURVEDIC CORRESPONDENCE COURSE

PART I. FINAL TEST

Answer all questions completely and definitively and mail back to THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF VEDIC STUDIES, P.O. BOX 8357, SANTA FE, NM 87504-8357.

SECTION 1. THE BACKGROUND OF AYURVEDA

1. List the twenty five tattvas?
2. What four groups do they come in?
3. What are the five elements and why are they so important on so many different levels?
4. What are the Tanmatras and why are they so important?
5. What are the three gunas and why are they considered to be probably the most important concept in Vedic Science?
6. Why does Ayurveda emphasize sattva?
7. What is the status of the mind in Ayurveda and Sankhya? look up
8. What are the four goals of life?
9. Why is the principle of cause and effect important in Ayurveda?
10. Why is the cosmological background of Ayurveda so significant in its study?

SECTION 2. AYURVEDIC ANATOMY AND PHYSIOLOGY

1. What are the main qualities of Vata?
2. What are the main qualities of Pitta?
3. What are the main qualities of Kapha?
4. What are the sites of accumulation for the three humors in the body?
5. What are the twenty attributes and how are they used in Ayurveda?
6. What are the five forms of Vata and how do they differ in their movement? see pg 58
7. What are the five forms of Pitta and what different substances do each digest?

8. What are the five forms of Kapha and what different forms of lubrication do each provide?
9. What are Prana, Tejas and Ojas?

10. Why is Ojas the key to health?
11. What are the single most important forms of Vata, Pitta and Kapha in terms of the treatment of disease?
12. From what are Pitta and Kapha produced in the body?
13. What are the seven Kalas?
14. What are the three waste materials?

15. What are the signs of deficient feces in the body?
16. What are the four states of the digestive fire?
17. What are the three stages of digestion?
18. What is Ama?
19. What are the seven tissues (dhatus)?

20. Explain the process of nutrition for plasma (rasa dhatu)?
21. What are the signs of excess blood in the body.
22. List all the channel systems (srotas) of the body.
23. What are the different kinds of impairment of flow through the channels?
24. What is the nature and function of Ambhuvaha srotas, the water metabolism system.

25. What conditions are caused by blockage of the channels?
26. What are the thirteen natural urges not to be suppressed?
27. What are the main Pitta organs of the body?
28. What are the main Vata organs of the body?
29. What are the main Kapha organs of the body?
30. How does Ayurvedic Anatomy and Physiology differ from the usual western approach, what has it taught you?

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PART II. THE PRINCIPLES OF AYURVEDA CONTINUED

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SECTION 2. YOGA AND AYURVEDIC PSYCHOLOGY

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PART II. LESSON 1

CONSTITUTIONAL EXAMINATION

This section is similar to that on constitution in AYURVEDIC HEALING, A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE. However, it provides more detail to it.

The most important factor in Ayurveda is "the determination of individual constitution" (Prakriti pariksha). Once we have learned the basic principles of Ayurvedic anatomy and physiology we have the background to recognize the different conditions of the humors in different individuals.

Even if we cannot diagnose all diseases in detail, if we can at least ascertain the basic constitution we can still function as effective health educators and establish an appropriate life-regime for our clients. We can prescribe the proper diet, general herbs for constitution, oils, massage and other such safe but effective treatments.

According to Ayurveda, the superior physician is one who can recognize the humors in their various states, not necessarily one who knows how to diagnose many diseases. While the former knowledge gives us the knowledge of the life-force and how to balance it, the latter gets us caught in the disease as the primary factor and ceases to be wholistic. While Western medicine is more concerned with classifying the disease, Ayurveda aims at understanding the life-force and learning to work with it.

THE SEVEN HUMORAL TYPES

Some individuals are strongly predominant in one humor or another. These we might call pure Vata (wind), pure Pitta (bile) and pure Kapha (phlegm) types.

"Dual types" also exist, when two or more humors stand in relatively equal proportion. Three different dual types exist as Vata-Pitta (wind-bile), Vata-Kapha (wind-phlegm) and Pitta-Kapha (bile-water).

An even, balanced or VPK type, sometimes called a "triple type", is also found, making seven major constitutional variations.

Even within these seven types different subgroups exist but this is enough differentiation to effectively treat most conditions.

TREATMENT OF MIXED TYPES

It should be noted that mixed types are not necessarily indicative of better or worse health, though they may tend towards the latter. They do serve, however, to complicate treatment in that we cannot simply target one humor or another. Efforts to balance one humor may aggravate another.

For dual types, therefore, it is often better to try to raise the third humor, the one that is too low (though the usual Ayurvedic rule to try to lower humors that are too high).

Vata-Pitta types should try to increase Kapha. Pitta-Kapha types should try to increase Vata. Vata-Kapha types should aim at developing Pitta. In this way it will be easier to understand which qualities need to be balanced.

For triple types treatment is often symptomatic or seasonal as no basic imbalance needs to be treated. Triple types are not necessarily more healthy but do tend to be, as they have no underlying tendency towards excess.

GIVING PROPORTIONS FOR THE HUMORS

Often numbers are given to denote the proportion of the three humors in the body. Commonly the number 1 indicates low state of the humor, 2 moderate state, 3 high, 4 very high and 5 extreme.

Vata 4, Pitta 2, Kapha 1, would show a high Vata, low Kapha person.

However, we should carefully note that there is no fixed or standard way of using numbers to denote the humors. Different practitioners may give them different values according to their own standards of measurement. This method can be very convenient but can also be misleading if we do not know the particular standard being applied. Hence we need to determine what our numbers will be for how or low levels of the humor.

VARIATIONS OF HUMORAL IMBALANCES

Different degrees of aggravation of the humors can exist as well. There is much difference between high Vata as insomnia and high Vata as paralysis. The former may be a temporary and mild Vata increase. The latter can be a long term and severe Vata increase.

In addition, the humors can become unbalanced in different ways, relative to their different attributes. High Vata, excess air, for example, can manifest as excess dryness, causing rigidity or reduced motion. It can also manifest under one of its other qualities as excess mobility, causing tremors, a condition appearing almost opposite in attributes to the former.

Hence though the humors give us a simple background for

understanding conditions, more specific analysis has often to be considered per the particular qualities that may be out of balance. The humors give us a general background for more specific diagnosis. While this general background may give us an effective general means of treatment, it can also be fine tuned for more specific treatment. In this regard please note the section on the twenty attributes again.

Outer circumstances can often aggravate the humors not predominant in the nature. These include climate, environment, life-style and culture.

For example, we live in a very Vata (high air) culture with constant travel, stimulation and communication, hence Vata (air) disorders are more common here than in other cultures, even in individuals of different predominant humors. Such variations should not be lost sight of when we examine our constitution.

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EXAMINATION OF CONSTITUTION

The following is a detailed examination of constitution. Note which humor you check the most for an individual and this will usually be the predominant humor. Which humors are second and third should also be evident, or mixed types. Give more weight to factors regarded as major, particularly when it is hard to make a decision.

Generally speaking, we know ourselves well enough to determine our own constitution. Determining that of friends is more difficult. Even differences of opinion sometimes exist among well qualified Ayurvedic practitioners. This does not mean that one of them has necessarily made a mistake. Different practitioners may be more sensitive to one or other humor in your nature depending upon various factors. They may be choosing to work on one in preference to the other.

The natural constitution is most easily revealed by the fixed attributes of the physical body. These include frame, weight and complexion. The general state of the metabolism and digestion through time is also a good indicator. Life long habits and proclivities, and life long disease tendency can also be important.

Though constitution tends to remain the same through out the life, exceptional factors like a long term illness can change it. Sometimes it may change with the stages of life, if it is not too much one way or the other.

V is for Vata, the biological air humor, P is for Pitta, fire and K is for Kapha, water.

BASIC BODILY STRUCTURE

FRAME

V----unusually tall or short, thin; poorly developed physique
P----medium; moderately developed physique
K----stout, stocky, short, big; well developed physique

Vata people are usually taller or shorter than the average. Most extreme types in height are characteristically Vata. But they will usually be thin as well. Kapha people are sometimes tall but will still tend to be stocky or big in build and hold weight. Pitta types may be revealed more by other factors, like appetite, as they fall in between.

WEIGHT

V----low, hard to hold weight, prominent veins and bones
P----moderate, good muscles
K----heavy, tends towards obesity

Vata people can be obese but will usually have more variable weight gain and weight loss, with spongy tissues. Generally they cannot hold much weight even if they eat excessively. Kapha types may not be heavy but will have to struggle to keep their weight down, as they easily accumulate fat and water. Pitta types usually stay at an even weight even if they are heavy eaters, though too much red meat or greasy food can make them overweight as well.

COMPLEXION

V----dull, brown, darkish
P----red, ruddy, flushed, glowing
K----white, pale

Complexion must be adjusted per racial characteristics. All black people will tend towards darker complexion but are not more commonly Vata for that reason. Nordic (north European) types tend towards reddish complexion but may not be Pitta.

Vata types tend to lack in lustre, which often gives a darkish or dull tinge to the complexion. Pitta types are easily flushed and hot. Light appears to come forth from their skin. Kapha types have a more white or pearly type complexion.

Diseases of skin discoloration, even when it turns white as in vitiligo or in an albino, is more indicative of Pitta, which burns out the pigmentation of the skin.

SKIN TEXTURE AND TEMPERATURE
V----thin, dry, cold, rough, cracked, prominent veins
P----warm, moist, pink, with moles, freckles, acne
K----thick, white, moist, cold, soft, smooth

Skin texture is often a more reliable factor than complexion. Pitta types sunburn easily and more commonly suffer from skin rashes or sores, including acne; though these may arise more temporarily from impure blood in any of the humors. Their skin will be warm to the touch.

Vata types are plagued with chronic dry skin and hair, often with wrinkles, cracks or fissures. Their skin will be cold, dry and not very thick. Kapha types have oily skin and hair and often much subcutaneous fat or edema. To the touch their skin will be cool, damp or soggy.

HAIR
V----scanty, coarse, dry, brown, slightly wavy
P----moderate, fine, soft, early grey or bald
K----abundant, oily, thick, very wavy, lustrous

Again, color of hair varies according to racial characteristics. It is often more the lustre, texture and quality of the hair that is most significant.

Pitta types tend to bald or grey early but the head will be ruddy or sensitive to sun. But Vata types, with their poor nutrition may also bald early and often have dandruff. They will be more sensitive to wind and the head will have a dullish tinge to its color.

Kapha types have attractive, abundant, thick hair but sometimes may have excessive body hair.

HEAD
V----small, thin, long, unsteady
P----moderate
K----large, stocky, steady

Head size also tends to reflect mental nature as Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. Larger head may indicate better intelligence. Hence the movements of the head may be more important than the size.

Vata types tends towards stiff neck and rigidity of the head, as well as excess mobility on the other hand. Their head movements are not necessarily more frequent but are more erratic. Kapha types have the least head movements and usually have more square heads. Pitta falls in between.

A typical Vata and Kapha head style is like in the old movie comedians, Abbot and Costello, a long thin, pointed head and face and a square, stocky one.

FOREHEAD
V----small, wrinkled
P----with folds
K----large, broad

Forehead also tends to reflect mental nature. Those with good minds and memories will often have prominent foreheads even if Vata constitution. Otherwise it is much like the head in factors.

A large and prominent forehead shows a Ganesh type. Such types have powerful minds and good memories, though they can come in any of the three humoral types.

FACE
V----thin, small, long, wrinkled, dusky, dull
P----moderate, ruddy, sharp contours
K----large, round, fat, white or pale, soft contours

Kapha people, particularly women, often have a typical large, round or moon face. Pitta types have more angular features and a penetrating look. Vata types look more gaunt or weathered. The color and complexion of the face can be judged the same as that generally.

A good Ayurvedic practitioner can usually determine the constitution by face alone.

NECK
V----thin, long
P----medium
K----large, thick

Kapha types tend to have large, square thick necks, which are often not very long. Vata types have long necks and often develop neck problems, with loose tendons in the neck. They may crane or bend the neck.

EYEBROWS
V----small, thin, unsteady
P----moderate, fine
K----thick, bushy, many hairs

EYELASHES
V----small, dry, firm
P----small, thin, fine
K----large, thick, oily, firm

EYES
V----small, dry, thin, brown, dull, unsteady
P----medium, thin, red (inflamed easily), green, piercing
K----wide, prominent, thick, oily, white, attractive

The eyes are another important indicator. Pitta types often have piercing and penetrating eyes, but are more commonly sensitive to light, develop photophobic headaches and more commonly need glasses and sunglasses.

Kapha types have big, wide, pearly attractive eyes and big lashes and brows. They also cry easily and may have mucus discharges in the eye. Their eye movements are steady but not sharp.

Vata types may suffer from blinking (usually from dryness of the eyes) or tremors of the eyes and excessive or erratic eye movement. It is hard for them to concentrate their eyes on any point for very long.

NOSE
V----thin, small, long, dry, crooked
P----medium
K----thick, big, firm, oily

Nose often varies according to racial characteristics, but can still be of some help. Size and breadth is the main thing, as well as complexion. Pitta often has a sharp or pointed nose, but long, narrow and pointed is Vata. Kapha nose often has wide nostrils.

LIPS
V----thin, small, darkish, dry, unsteady
P----medium, soft, red
K----thick, large, oily, smooth, firm

Kapha types more commonly have big and attractive lips. Pitta will usually have ruddy lips and face. Vata types will have thin lips, which they may tend to bite a lot, and will be frequently dry or chapped.

TEETH AND GUMS
V----thin, dry, small, rough, crooked, receding gums
P----medium, soft, pink, gums bleed easily
K----large, thick, soft, pink, oily

The state of the mouth is quite variable according to diet and dental hygiene and so may not always be significant but form and

color are the main things here also, as well as the general structure of the teeth. Vata types may have spaces between teeth or buck teeth. Kapha has large, white, attractive teeth. Pitta types suffer more from inflammatory diseases of the mouth, as elsewhere.

SHOULDERS
V----thin, small, flat, hunched
P----medium
K----broad, thick, firm, oily

Vata types, as they are more dominated by fear, tend to have hunched shoulders and tight muscles generally. Pitta often has the best build as they do not tend to over or underweight.

CHEST
V----thin, small, narrow, poorly developed
P----medium
K----broad, large, well or overly developed

Vata types have a narrow epigastric angle. Kapha types usually possess a broad one. Pitta types often have a wiry build, with a medium size epigastric angle.

ARMS
V----thin, overly small or long, poorly developed
P----medium
K----large, thick, round, well developed

Vata may have thin, long or more spindly arms with pronounced elbows. Kapha has round and fleshy arms and forearms. Pitta has wiry arms.

HANDS
V----small, thin, dry, cold, rough, fissured, unsteady
P----medium, warm, pink
K----large, thick, oily, cool, firm

Kapha types often have big, square or round hands without many lines. Vata tends towards narrow hands with many lines and often with pronounced knuckles or irregularity in the shape of the fingers. Veins will also be prominent on the hands as elsewhere in Vata types. Pitta types have warm hands often even in cold weather.

The hands also reveal the state of the mind or Sattva. Refined hands shows a more highly evolved character. Long and elegant hands show more sensitivity than short, stocky hands with stubby fingers.

THIGHS
V----thin, narrow
P----medium
K----well-developed, round, fat

Big, plump thighs are more common in Kapha types, along with possible cellulitis. Of course, women have more body fat and larger thighs than men, who will usually be more developed in the shoulders.

LEGS
V----thin, excessively long or short, prominent knees
P----medium
K----large, stocky

Vata people like to walk and run but may suffer more from lack of coordination in walking. Kapha people are able to stand for long periods of time.

CALVES
V----small, hard, tight
P----loose, soft
K----shapely, firm

FEET
V----small, thin, long, dry, rough, fissured, unsteady
P----medium, soft, pink
K----large, thick, hard, firm

The dryness of Vata often manifests through the feet, which need to be oiled regularly. Pitta types will have good complexion and circulation even in the feet. Kapha types with their thick skin can easily go barefoot.

JOINTS
V----small, thin, dry, unsteady, cracking
P----medium, soft, loose
K----large, thick, well built

Vata people are well known for prominent joints. This is often because their lack of weight allows the joints to be exposed. Kapha types have larger joints but they may be obscured by surrounding tissue. The oily nature of Pitta affords them softness of the joints, which may also therefore be loose.

NAILS
V----small, thin, dry, rough, fissured, cracked, darkish
P----medium, soft, pink
K----large, thick, smooth, white, firm, oily

The nails show the general state of our nutrition, our mineral absorption and bone metabolism. This is usually poorest in Vata types. The nails become rougher and more Vata as we age, or after debilitating diseases.

WASTE MATERIALS/ METABOLISM----
URINE
V----scanty, difficult, colorless
P----profuse, yellow, red, burning
K----moderate, whitish, milky

Urine analysis is an important diagnostic tool in Ayurveda. Vata also has more bubbly or frothy urine, which may be difficult to discharge. Pitta has more urinary tract infections. Kapha has more thick and mucoid type urine.

FECES
V----scanty, dry, hard, difficult or painful, gas, tends towards constipation
P----abundant, loose, sometimes yellowish, tends towards diarrhea, with burning sensation
K----moderate, solid, sometimes pale in color, mucus in stool

This is another of the main factors in constitutional determination. Kapha people may have constipation from slow metabolism but the stool when it does come out will not be hard. It will be abundant and soft. Pitta types may get constipated during fevers, but otherwise tend to be loose. Chronic constipation, particularly in the elderly, is Vata.

SWEAT/ BODY ODOR
V----scanty, no smell
P----profuse, hot, strong smell
K----moderate, cold, pleasant smell

Sweat can be influenced by many factors like temperature and diet. Meat eaters will sweat more than vegetarians. Such factors should be taken into consideration.

Vata people seldom sweat. Pitta types tend to sweat a lot, particularly when exposed to heat. Kapha types will sweat a lot when they exercise but not otherwise. Generally emotional distress will cause more sweat. Spontaneous sweating or autonomic sweating in conditions of emotional distress is usually Vata in nature.

APPETITE
V----variable, erratic
P----strong, sharp
K----constant, low

This is one of the best long term indicators of constitution. Vata types have extremes of appetite, either no appetite or extreme hunger. When hungry they get light headed and fearful. Kapha types have a consistent but not high appetite and, moreover, like to be in and around or working with food. They are attached to food. Pitta types are often able to digest almost anything and can eat large amounts of food without gaining weight. They have very strong appetites and often get angry when they haven't eaten.

Yet most diseases tend to weaken or lower our appetite, including colds and fevers.

TASTE
V----prefers sweet, sour or salty food, cooked with oil and spiced
P----prefers sweet, bitter or astringent food, raw, lightly cooked without spices or spices
K----prefers pungent, bitter or astringent food, cooked with spices but not oil

This reflects the taste preferences of the humors when relatively in balance. If there are toxins in the system (Ama), the sense of taste may be perverted and become opposite what they should be. Culture and conditioning also have their effect here. Most people prefer sweet food. Hence this is better judged not as the tastes that people like but the ones that make them feel better, healthier and more free of toxins.

CIRCULATION
V----poor, variable, erratic
P----good, warm
K----slow, steady

Vata people have poor circulation and may be prone to palpitations. They often have cold and dry extremities and abdomen. Pitta people have excellent circulation and may be prone to flushing up (red face). Kapha people have low but consistent circulation. When overweight their peripheral circulation will be poor with cold limbs but their abdomen tends to stay warm.

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS----
ACTIVITY
V----quick, fast, unsteady, erratic, hyperactive
P----medium, motivated, purposeful, goal seeking
K----slow, steady, stately

Vata types exhibit some extreme of activity. Their hyperactivity may however bring them to a state of exhaustion, withdrawal or paralysis. Or their extreme mental activity may cause outer activity to be reduced. Pitta types are only active towards a particular aim. They are focussed but not necessary broad in what they attempt. Kapha types are steady but not always adaptable in action and may get caught in a pattern. They may not want to act very much or very often.

STRENGTH/ EXERTION
V----low, poor endurance, starts and stops quickly
P----medium, intolerant of heat
K----strong, good endurance, but slow in starting

Vata types are often good runners and can develop a good deal of physical adaptability. They are poor at lifting or carrying weight, however, and tire easily. Pitta people like to be strong to demonstrate their power and domination but may not have as much endurance as they want. Kapha types have good endurance but not necessarily high performance.

SEXUAL NATURE
V----variable, erratic, deviant, strong desire but low energy, few children
P----moderate, passionate, quarrelsome, dominating
K----low but constant sexual desire, good sexual energy, devoted, many children

Vata types can be extreme in their sexual behavior. They are more often promiscuous and deviant on one hand, but also can more commonly be celibate (but not always consistently). Homosexuality and masturbation aggravates or indicates Vata.

Kapha types are seldom promiscuous but are usually unable to give sex up either, unless they are strongly attached to a traditional or monastic faith from childhood. They like the constancy of touch and affection.

Pitta types are more involved in the drama of sex and like to dominate. Yet when they are preoccupied with other goals, they may not be very sexual.

SENSITIVITY
V----fear of cold, wind, sensitive to dryness
P----fear of heat, dislike of sun, fire
K----fear of cold, damp, likes wind and sun

Vata types have the greatest sensitivity to the elements and must protect themselves properly from them. Kapha types do well outdoors but prefer to sunbathe or relax rather than work or exercise. Pitta types are most tolerant of cold.

RESISTANCE TO DISEASE
V----poor, variable, weak immune system
P----medium, prone to infections
K----good, consistent, strong immune system

Vata types tend to come down with whatever diseases are around and may develop chronic conditions. Pitta types have trouble with infections and bleeding, with febrile diseases. Kapha types are able to resist most diseases but those of a damp or phlegmatic nature often strike them hard.

DISEASE TENDENCY
V----nervous system diseases, pain, arthritis, mental disorders
P----febrile diseases, infections, inflammatory diseases
K----respiratory system diseases, mucus, edema

Vata types suffer from pain and are very sensitive to it. Their diseases mainly involve the bones and nerves, mainly through the large intestine. Pitta types suffer more from fever, inflammation and burning sensations, diseases of the blood and liver. Kapha types are more susceptible to congestive disorders, diseases of the lungs.

REACTION TO MEDICATIONS
V----quick, low dosage needed, unexpected side effects or nervous reactions
P----medium
K----slow, high dosage required, effects slow to manifest

Vata types tend to be hypersensitive and may overreact to things. Often their reactions to herbs or drugs is extreme or erratic. We should give them medications in small dosages first and increase gradually. Subtle medications like aromas, spices or gems can affect them strongly. Kapha types may need strong dosages or therapies to notice any effect.

PULSE
V----thready, rapid, irregular, weak/ like a snake
P----wiry, bounding, moderate/ like a frog
K----deep, slow, steady, rolling, slippery/ like a swan

The quality of the pulse is the most important thing. For Vata it is thin and erratic. For Pitta it is wiry and bounding. For Kapha it is slow, broad or deep.

See also section on Pulse, Part II. of the course.

MENTAL FACTORS AND EXPRESSION----
VOICE
V----low, weak, hoarse
P----high pitch, sharp
K----pleasant, deep, good tone

Tone of voice can also be influenced by strength or weakness and other transient factors. Kapha people have beautiful voices and make good singers, like opera singers. Yet they may lack in energy and motivation. Pitta people make good orators and make strong singers, like rock singers. Vata people often have a monotonous tone of voice and not much strength to it.

SPEECH
V----quick, inconsistent, erratic, talkative
P----moderate, argumentative, convincing
K----slow, definite, not talkative

Speech is another important indicator. Vata people are hyperactive in speech and may ramble on and on. They may at times become silent, though they may still be talking in their minds. Kapha people are hypoactive in speech but like to draw out the state of communication. They like to be with people without necessarily saying much. Pitta people like to talk at rather than with others and are often trying to prove a point or criticizing something.

MENTAL NATURE
V----quick, adaptable, indecisive
P----intelligent, penetrating, critical
K----slow, steady, dull

Mental nature does not entirely equate with physical nature (see section below) but usually correlates to a great extent. One humor is not necessarily more intelligent than another but each has a different kind of mentality.

Vata people have quick but often superficial minds and are better at information or abstract thought. They do not have much emotion but may have fluctuating moods. Pitta people manifest their intelligence through a questioning nature and often have a probing or scientific bent. They are better at ascertaining goals or values. Kapha people may be good at broad principles with strong sentiments and much consistency. Yet they may be poor at details and are more dominated by their feelings.

MEMORY
V----poor, notices things easily but easily forgets
P----sharp, clear
K----slow to take notice but will not forget

Memory may reflect more mental than physical nature. A good intellect often gives a good memory. The quality of the or nature of the memory is more important than its strength.

Kapha people remember personal feelings, love and sentiments, often intimate human interchanges. Their memory is colored by emotion. Pitta people remember hurts, insults and also victories and achievements. Their memory is colored by their will. Vata people may remember ideas or information, or trivia. Their memory is dominated by ideas or sensations.

EMOTIONAL TENDENCIES
V----fearful, anxious, nervous
P----angry, irritable, contentious
K----calm, content, attached, sentimental

This factor is of great importance. Vata's ungroundedness always tends to breed fear. Vata people are not highly emotional but are nervously sensitive and so may show shifting reactions, either thoughts or emotions. Pitta's vehemence causes anger and strong display of emotions. Kapha's settled nature breeds attachment and sentimentality.

However, we each possess all these emotions, and each of them can turn into the other. So again, we must discriminate which are characteristic and which may be of a more transient or secondary nature.

NEUROTIC TENDENCIES
V----hysteria, trembling, anxiety attacks
P----extreme temper, rage, tantrums
K----depression, unresponsiveness, sorrow

Vata tends toward extreme emotional expressions, often along with loss of sensory or motor control, to the extreme of tremors or convulsions. Yet these emotions are often transient and superficial. Pitta types have anger attacks or temper tantrums. Kapha types become chronically depressed, lethargic or sorrowful.

FAITH
V----erratic, changeable, rebel
P----determined, fanatic, leader
K----constant, loyal, conservative

Faith is an important indicator of psychological nature. Good faith in life and truth indicates Sattva, inner virtue.

Vata people are unsteady and often contrary in their faith, which may be constantly changing. Or they may have faith in many different things. Pitta people may apply their faith in a strong manner that may become aggressive. Kapha people stick to their faith, often whether it is good or bad and often have an unquestioned sense of loyalty. They can be attached to the status quo.

SLEEP
V----light, tends towards insomnia
P----moderate, may wake up but will fall asleep again
K----heavy, difficulty in waking up

Sleep is an important physical and mental indicator. Vata types with more air and ether have a hard time sleeping. Almost anything disturbs their sleep or wakes them up. Pitta types often have dream disturbed sleep. Kapha types with more earth and water sleep easily and may tend to sleep during the day also.

Vata tends to sleep less than four hours at a stretch; Pitta four to seven; Kapha can sleep for eight to ten hours.

DREAMS
V----flying, moving, restless, nightmares
P----colorful, passionate, conflict
K----romantic, sentimental, watery, few dreams

Dreams are also an important factor in constitution. But due consideration must be made for stress or psychological problems which can disturb sleep in any of the humors.

Vata types have the most dreams but they are often erratic or disturbed. Pitta types often have the most colorful or dramatic dreams, but they may disturb their sleep, particularly when they are violent. Kapha types are often unable to remember their dreams but may have a vague sense of pleasure from them.

HABITS

V----likes moving, travelling, parks, plays, jokes, stories, artistic activities, dancing

P----likes competitive sports, politics, hunting

K----likes water, sailing, flowers, cosmetics, business

Habits can be more indicative of personal traits or mental nature. They should not be taken too seriously for determining constitution. Vata types are generally diverse, curious and erratic in their habits, sometimes eccentric. Pitta types are purposeful and competitive and seek results and achievements. Kapha types like to luxuriate or relax, or be lazy.

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CONSTITUTIONAL TYPES AND VALUE JUDGEMENTS

In ancient and medieval India, Kapha was traditionally considered to be the better of the three humors for health, fertility and longevity and to make for more faithful and loyal culture bearers and better parents. Pitta types were considered better for military or political roles. Vata types were regarded as rebels or outsiders but as also carrying the seeds of social change and renovation. Hence Vata is sometimes looked down upon as unreliable or even criminal in tendencies.

Which type is preferable often depends upon the cultural values. It may also vary according to the state of the environment. In America we prefer the Vata-Pitta type combining thin and active body with expressive and competitive mind. This type is more communicative, reactive, changing and outgoing. Yet it is more volatile and also more likely to burn itself out.

Hence we should be careful not to make too many value judgements while ascertaining constitution. Each constitution has its strengths and weaknesses. The beauty of Ayurveda is in showing us how to use these. It is not to make us feel good or bad for our constitution.

Vata constitution is more prone to disease but also has more ease in change and hence is often more open to treatment. Kapha has less disease tendency but is slower to adapt treatment measures. Pitta is the most engaging but more easily becomes hostile. Hence the disease tendency of each type is also balanced out by their openness and flexibility in treatment.

We should always remember that constitutional analysis is not for stereotyping people but for helping us tune into their uniqueness. We should not stop short with several pure humoral types but with the humors as general guidelines for a more specific analysis and treatment down to the level of the attributes.

SYNTHESIS OF FACTORS

After examining all these factors in a patient, note their predominance. Some degree of all three humors will be in evidence in all people, as we each contain all three of them to some degree, but usually one humor will prevail.

When the more visible and physical factors like frame, complexion or digestion differ from habits or emotional factors, go with the former. Unfortunately there is no simple way of weighing these different factors, though some attempts at this have been made.

Also note your own constitution. You will tend to see others like yourself and may project that bias in your examination. You will have a harder time understanding those of radically different types.

The humors are more obvious when out of balance. Those who take care of their health will be harder to judge. A Kapha type following a strict diet may be hard to judge as Kapha. Hence it is important also to consider life long tendencies, past conditions and medical history. This may require taking the medical history of the client before making any final judgements.

The humors may become imbalanced in different ways. For example, a heavy or "anabolic form of Vata" exists, wherein the individual holds much weight and water but largely owing to fear and trauma to the kidneys, what are high Vata rather than high Kapha causes. Their weight is more spongy, almost as if they were filled up with air.

Similarly a Vata disorder occurs in Kapha types wherein excess weight blocks the nourishment to the deeper tissues and causes fear, anxiety and insomnia (weak kidneys).

Moreover, a person may temporarily suffer from an excess of a humor not predominant in the nature generally. Hence an obese person may have temporarily high Kapha owing to various factors but generally, through out most of their life be thin, Pitta or Vata in nature. Always determine how long a person has had a particular trait.

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STRONG AND WEAK TYPES

Apart from the specific quality of the constitution according to the three humors, note also the general strength of the constitution. This is a helpful idea from Chinese medicine that notes strong or weak, excess or deficient types more so than humoral differences. It allows us to determine whether we should apply strong or moderate methods to reduce the humor. Excess types can take strong therapies. Deficient types require milder and longer therapies.

Usually, Kapha types have the most strength but do not tend to display it. Pitta types are more aggressive but do not have always have patience or endurance to back it up. Vata types tend to be weak, deficient or emaciated. But this is very general.

The strength or weakness of the individual varies according to many factors, including chronic diseases or poor nutrition. Hence after determining the constitution of the individual according to the humors, we should also note whether they are strong or weak, excess or deficient within the field of that humor.

Generally men tend to be stronger types or have more physical energy. Woman are more commonly weaker types or low in energy. Yet women have better endurance than men. Strong types have usually better health and are capable of stronger exertion but can suffer from extreme and acute conditions like heart attacks or high fevers that may cause early quick or early death. Weak types more commonly have poor health and chronic diseases but sometimes still live a long time.

KAPHA

A strong Kapha type has a strong usually broad and wavy pulse, good energy, generally good health and good capacity for work, good muscle tone, excellent resistance to disease and good immune system. They have much faith, confidence and integrity. They are solid, steady, sturdy and yet capable of action and response.

A weak Kapha type has a weak usually slow or wavy pulse, low energy, shortness of breath, flabby or flaccid skin and muscles, and easy fatigue along with a very slow metabolism. They tend to be more shy, dependent or passive, cry easily or feel easily hurt.

Both would have otherwise predominately Kapha characteristics.

PITTA

A strong Pitta type has a strong wiry pulse, good energy, generally good health and good capacity for work. Such types are often aggressive, dynamic, expressive and leaders. They have sharp and clear minds and strong wills.

A weak Pitta type has a weak wiry pulse, low energy and often anemia or chronic liver disorders and hidden anger and frustrated emotions. They are often defensive or easily feel attacked

Both would have otherwise predominately Pitta characteristics.

VATA

A strong Vata type has a strong yet narrow pulse, good energy, good physical adaptability and mobility and generally good health and good healing energy (prana). The mind will usually be strong, quick and comprehensive with much curiosity. They will be very talkative and communicative.

A weak Vata type would have a weak thready pulse, low energy,

poor circulation, suffer from emaciation and often chronic disease and debility. The mind will be wavering and erratic, with much fear and negativity. They may be secretive or fearful, without much faith in life.

Both strong and weak Vata types would otherwise have predominately Vata characteristics.

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THE EIGHT DIFFICULT CONSTITUTIONS

Some constitutional types are considered to be very difficult to treat, so much so that in ancient times the people who possessed them were often considered to be cursed. Such conditions show deep seated disorders, often congenital or hormonal in nature and usually give poor longevity. They only fully apply when the following conditions are very extreme, but they do show us factors that make prognosis more uncertain. Racial differences have to be noted in this regard also.

There are eight such conditions, four groups of opposites; those who are

1. very tall,
2. very short,

3. with excessive body hair,
4. devoid of body hair,

5. excessively dark in complexion,
6. excessively white in complexion,

7. extremely fat or
8. excessively thin.

EXTREMES OF HEIGHT

Extremes of height show Vata disorders. In our culture, for men, this would usually be a height of at least six and a half feet for the very tall, or that of at least less than five feet for the very short. For women it would be four to six inches less. It is most applicable for giants and dwarfs. In this regard we should note the stature of the parents. If an unusually tall or short person comes from a family without such extremes, it is more likely a sign of constitutional imbalances.

In these conditions, high Vata causes lack of coordination, poor circulation and nervous system diseases.

EXTREMES OF BODY HAIR

Excess body hair shows high Kapha and too much earth in the body. This leads to blockage of organic functions and possible blockage of the channels. It often shows Tamas or darkness in the mind.

Absence of body hair is caused by high Pitta burning out the skin. Sometimes high Vata with its tissue deficiency can cause it also.

EXTREMES OF COMPLEXION

Very dark complexion indicates high Vata. Very light, as in albinos, indicates high Pitta. Kapha people are often rather pale or white but not to such extremes.

EXTREMES OF WEIGHT

Extreme overweight is more common in high Kapha types, emaciation in high Vata. Overweight usually involves excess fat but the other tissues may be insufficient, particularly the reproductive fluid and Ojas. Generally overweight is a more significant disease causing factor than emaciation. It causes stagnation and accumulation of toxins that breed various diseases like arthritis, gout or asthma.

The excess weight serves to keep the heat of the body in the interior, as well as to hold Vata or the nervous energy and mental focus there. This keeps the digestive power strong causing excess appetite. The overweight suffer from poor longevity, difficulty in movement, low libido, lack of strength, bad odor of the body and breath, and excess sweating, hunger and thirst.

Emaciated types may have their digestive power so low or suppressed that they have little appetite, along with malabsorption of food, and cannot take heavy food or food in large quantities. Their endurance and stamina will be low. They will be intolerant of heat and cold, suffer easily from colds, flu and coughs. They often develop hemorrhoids and prolapse of the organs generally.

Hence there is a threshold of excess or deficient weight in the body. When the weight is over this threshold it will tend to accumulate even further and very little will be able to slow it down. When the weight is below its lower threshold, it will tend to stay low and little will be able to make it increase. Hence these conditions can be very difficult to treat.

All these extreme and difficult conditions occur when some such metabolic threshold is broken.

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PART II. LESSON 1

STUDY EXERCISE

Begin to examine the constitutions of people around you. Start with yourself, your family and friends. See how many different types you can find. See if you tend to associate with people of similar constitution. See if you look for support or nourishment from Kapha types, if you run into conflict with Pitta types or find Vata types to be difficult to do business with.

Go to a public place where you can see a variety of people. Examine the different people and see if you can ascertain their constitution by their appearance and movements. See if similar types tend to stay together.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Why is constitutional analysis so important in Ayurveda?
2. What are the seven basic types of Ayurvedic constitution according to the predominance of the three humors?
3. Why do we give emphasis to the general frame of the individual in the determination of constitution?
3. Name some of the most important factors for determining constitution?
4. Name some factors that are apt to be influenced my racial characteristics?

5. Name some factors that will be influenced by the nature of the mind?
6. Why is it important to note the strength or weakness of constitutional types?
7. What are the eight difficult constitutions?

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PART II. LESSON 2

MENTAL NATURE

Mental or psychological nature usually reflects the biological humors as indicated.

VATA PSYCHOLOGY

Individuals with Vata (air) physical types, will usually have Vata (air) mental types, with emotional tendencies towards fear, anxiety, insecurity and ungroundedness. They will be mentally changeable, excitable and indecisive with quickly fluctuating and unpredictable moods and interests. Their minds and senses are sensitive, usually excessively so, but unsteady.

They have good but erratic mental powers. They are quick to perceive things and to react but not always consistent in their judgements and opinions. They can be very comprehensive in their views or very superficial. They will have many ideas, much speculation but tend to be lacking in practical application and can often be deceived with threats or promises. Their intellect is often well developed with grasp of much information. They often are able to develop the abstract and philosophical part of the mind once their gain more control of their minds.

Vata minds are good at both grasping and forgetting. They are quick at both attachment and detachment, fast at both getting emotional and expressing emotions, as well as forgetting them. They will not have much courage or daring and tend towards cowardice. Yet they seldom become vindictive and usually blame themselves.

Generally they will be of a more solitary nature and do not have a lot of intimate friends. However, they are good at forming friendships with people outside their social sphere or age group and may have many superficial acquaintances. They do not make good leaders but they will not be good followers either. They will not be very materialistic and are not so concerned with accumulating possessions or money. They often spend money quickly and easily but may also make it quickly and easily.

PITTA PSYCHOLOGY

Those with Pitta physical natures, will tend towards fiery emotions like irritability, anger and hatred. Their minds will be sharp, penetrating and somewhat aggressive. They will be logical,

critical, perceptive and intelligent. They are quick to get emotional, though they usually do not consider themselves to be emotional (in this regard they are seldom sentimental), and have no trouble expressing anger. They have difficulty, however, in controlling it.

They are determined, articulate, convincing and usually get their point across or dominate others with their ideas or their will. They often become self-righteous, sometimes fanatical. They usually possess strong wills, are dignified and make good leaders. They are ambitious, have great goals in life and work hard to achieve them.

While very helpful and kind to friends and followers, Pitta types can be cruel and unforgiving to opponents. They are bold, adventurous, daring and reckless and like danger and challenges. They are inventive, ingenious and often possess good mechanical skills. They enjoy the use and expression of energy and technology. Their memory is sharp and not sentimental. They have much clarity but may lack in compassion. They are more concerned with the accumulation of power than with material resources but will gather material resources to gain their ends.

KAPHA PSYCHOLOGY

Those with Kapha constitution will also tend towards watery emotions, like love and desire, romance and sentimentality, or, on the negative side, greed and lust. They will be kind, considerate and loyal, but not always capable of change and adaptation. They can be slow to respond, conservative, shy and obedient.

They tend to have many friends and to be very close to their family, community, culture, religion and country. They can be closed minded outside their sphere of habitual activity, however, and tend to be suspicious of strangers. They travel less and are happier at home. They easily get attached to almost anything and find it hard to let go of the past. While they can display affections easily, they are slow to express negative emotions, particularly anger.

Mentally, they are steady with good forethought but need time to consider things properly. They find it difficult to grasp abstract ideas and learn better through something practical. They are not always sensitive or perceptive but are seldom negative, rude or critical. They may throw their weight around, however, and like to expropriate things for themselves. Hence they accumulate possessions and value material objects and resources.

VARIATIONS OF MENTAL AND PHYSICAL TYPES

It is not uncommon to find exceptions to this correspondence of physical and psychological types. Nature has many different ways of making human beings and every possible variety must be manifested. Moreover, the energetics between the outer and inner aspects of our nature are not always of simple correspondence. If we apply Ayurveda too rigidly in this regard our approach may be psychologically naive.

A Kapha (heavy) physical type may have a Vata (light) mind, as, for instance, an obese but very talkative school teacher. Hence we must not treat psychological conditions simplistically according to the physical humor. The physical body may not simply reflect the mental nature but may try to balance or compensate for it.

As mental nature is more subtle than physical nature more variations in it are possible. As it is more changeable than physical nature, it can more easily take on temporary disturbances of a nature different than the physical constitution. Mental disturbances, therefore, are more likely to be different than the physical constitution than physical diseases. The mind is also very easily disturbed by the disease process and not always in a way that is of the same quality as the disease.

Generally, all diseases make us afraid, bring up the basic fear of death, and thereby tend to aggravate Vata or create anxiety in the mind.

When a difference between physical and mental nature exists we must be careful not to aggravate one in treating the other. Special herbs for the mind may have to be given considering the state of the mind. Hence we must learn to look at the mind directly, not just in the stereotype emotional pattern that goes with the physical constitution.

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MENTAL AND SPIRITUAL DISPOSITION

In the Vedic system, mental nature is usually judged according to the gunas, the prime attributes of nature (Prakriti) as Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. These indicate the mental traits respectively of clarity, distraction and dullness. The biological humors are given secondary importance in this approach.

These qualities reflect the level of development of the soul. They are not simply intellectual proclivities or emotional types. They show the sensitivity of the mind, its capacity to perceive truth and act according to it.

SATTVA

The mind itself is called Sattva (clarity), as it is its basic clear quality that allows perception to occur. The mind is naturally clear and pure but becomes darkened by negative thoughts and emotions.

Sattva is the divine or godly nature. When pure it produces enlightenment and Self-realization. It brings about internalization of the mind, the movement of the consciousness inward and the unification of the head and the heart.

RAJAS

Rajas is distraction or turbulence in the mind that causes us to look outward and seek fulfillment in the external world. It is the mind agitated by desire, which when frustrated creates anger. Rajas is disturbed thoughts and imaginings. It includes willfulness, manipulativeness and ego. It involves the seeking of power, stimulation and entertainment. In excess it creates a demonic (asuric) nature.

TAMAS

Tamas is dullness, darkness and inability to perceive. It is the mind clouded by ignorance and fear. Tamas creates sloth, sleep and inattention. It involves lack of mental activity, insensitivity and domination of the mind by external or subconscious forces. Tamas creates a servile or animal nature.

THE THREE QUALITIES AND THREE HUMORS

There have been a number of attempts to correspond the three humors to these three prime qualities or gunas. We find these in various traditional works on Ayurveda. They often appear to be rather simplistic.

By one system Kapha (water) is said to be sattvic, Pitta (fire) rajasic and Vata (air) tamasic. This is because Kapha types tend to be the gentlest and most calm, Pitta types tend to be the most aggressive and Vata types the most erratic and self-destructive.

By another system Pitta (fire) is said to be sattvic, Vata (air) rajasic and Kapha (water) tamasic. This is because Pitta possesses light, affords perception and generally is more intelligent, Vata has more hyperactivity and mental distraction and Kapha tends to lethargy and cloudiness.

Yet another system gives Vata as sattva, Pitta as rajas and Kapha as tamas. This is relative to the densities of the humors. Vata (air and ether) is most subtle, Kapha (earth and water) is most gross, with Pitta falling in between.

We can use these systems for their respective insights but should not attempt to apply them too rigidly. It is not bad (or good for that matter) to be any of the three humoral types. What is important is to function according to the higher qualities of our nature and each one of us has our own that are essential to the cosmic order.

This difference of systems shows that the three gunas and the three humors follow a different logic. Actually any of the three humors can correspond to any of the three gunas. Hence we have presented the larger picture here below, free of limiting stereotypes.

DISEASE TENDENCIES OF THE THREE QUALITIES

All diseases tend to rest upon psychological factors as the mind precedes the body in the order of creation. In particular, mental disorders are usually caused by failure of intelligence, or vitiation of Sattva.

This is caused by poor education (lack of moral or ethical values in upbringing), causing harm to others, excess stimulation and entertainment, dishonesty and untruthfulness. Such physical factors as wrong diet, eating of too much sweets, meat, junk food etc., excess sleep or lack of activity, can also contribute to it.

Sattva is improved by spiritual cultivation, yogic practises, meditation, compassion, truthfulness, spending time in nature, creative activities, pro-sattva diet and life regime in harmony with one's constitution.

SATTVA

Sattvic types have the greatest freedom from disease. Their nature is harmonious and adaptable. They strive towards balance and have peace of mind which cuts the psychological root of disease. They are considerate of others and take care of themselves and are good custodians of their physical bodies. They see all life as a learning experience and try to see the good in all things, including disease.

RAJAS

Rajasic types often have good energy but tend to burn themselves out through excessive activity. They attempt to much, expect too much and often overextend themselves. Disease symptoms are often acute and recovery is possible with the right remedial measures. They are impatient and inconsistent in dealing with disease and do not wish to take time or responsibility to get well. They will blame others for their condition and expect others to cure them.

TAMAS

Tamasic types have more chronic diseases including suppressed emotional conditions like cancer. Their energy and emotion tends to be stagnant and they are often caught in a pattern of negativity and self-destruction. Their own mental darkness is often the main

block in improving their condition. Their diseases tend to be deep seated, obstinate and to be difficult to treat. They do not seek proper treatment and usually have poor hygiene and devitalized diet. They will accept their disease as fate and will not take advantage of the methods that may cure them.

THE THREE MENTAL TYPES AND THE THREE HUMORS

Another method of balancing the three humors is to move from their tamasic and rajasic sides to their sattvic (spiritual) side.

It is usually not possible to transcend one's predominant humor but one can move to its higher level of functioning. For example, a Kapha (water) type can move from greed, a tamasic or rajasic emotion, to devotion, a sattvic emotion thus transforming an emotional disease tendency to a power of health and enlightenment.

Combining the three qualities and the three humors the following picture of mental development in human beings emerges. Each humor is divided according to the three qualities. In this we see that no humor is better than the other in terms of mental nature. The qualities vary but higher and lower aspects exist in each type.

We should also examine our mental constitution according to the proportion of the three qualities we find in ourselves. This will give us a better idea how to improve our minds and balance our disease tendency through yoga and the cultivation of character.

Most of us contain various degrees of these three mental qualities, just as we all have the three humors. Without sattva we could not perceive anything at all. Again it is the proportion that we need to ascertain. However, in the case of the qualities we should all strive towards sattva.

Seven different mental types can be ascertained for each humor (like the seven different humoral types). These are Pure Sattva, Pure Rajas, Pure Tamas, Sattva-Rajas, Sattva-Tamas, Rajas-Tamas and all three in equal proportion. Totally pure sattva (shuddha sattva) gives enlightenment.

Each individual should examine these mental traits and see which most fit their nature. Those which are negative, like disease causing habits, should be reduced by the appropriate remedial measures, like meditation, prayer, mantra, puja or various other forms of self-examination or surrender to the Divine.

It should be noted that our culture today is very rajasic, highly distracted, disturbed, hyperactive and overstimulated. Hence some rajasic traits may be more owing to the circumstances than entirely indicative our own disposition.

VATA (AIRY) MENTAL NATURE----

SATTVIC (Harmonious)

energetic, adaptable, flexible, quick in comprehension, good in communication, strong sense of human unity, strong healing energy, good enthusiasm, positive spirit, able to initiate things, good capacity for positive change and movement

RAJASIC (Disturbed)

indecisive, unreliable, hyperactive, agitated, volatile, restless, disturbed, distracted, nervous, anxious, overly talkative, superficial, noisy, disruptive, false enthusiasm, excitable

TAMASIC (Darkened)

fearful, servile, dishonest, secretive, depressed, self-destructive, drug addict, prone to sexual perversions, mentally disturbed, suicidal

PITTA (FIERY) MENTAL NATURE----

SATTVIC (Harmonious)

intelligent, clear, perceptive, enlightened, discriminating, good will, independent, warm, friendly, courageous, good guide and leader

RAJASIC (Disturbed)

willful, impulsive, ambitious, aggressive, controlling, critical, dominating, manipulating, angry, wrathful, reckless, proud, vain

TAMASIC (Darkened)

hateful, vile, vindictive, violent, destructive, psychopath, criminal, drug dealer, underworld figure

KAPHA (WATERY) MENTAL NATURE----

SATTVIC (Harmonious)

calm, peaceful, content, stable, consistent, loyal, loving, compassionate, forgiving, patient, devoted, receptive, nurturing, supportive, strong faith

RAJASIC (Disturbed)

controlling, attached, greedy, lustful, materialistic, sentimental, needing security, seeking of comfort and luxury

TAMASIC (Darkened)

dull, gross, lethargic, depressed, apathetic, slothful, coarse, slow comprehension, insensitive, a thief

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PART I. LESSON 2

STUDY EXERCISE

Just as the physical qualities, examine the mental qualities in yourself and others on an ongoing nature. Try to see Vata, Pitta and Kapha mental attitudes. Try to see sattvic, rajasic and tamasic mental attitudes and values. What does this tell you about yourself? What does it tell you about your culture? What does it indicate about your disease tendency? How can you improve the quality of sattva in yourself, your relationships and the world around you?

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. How are the humors useful in psychological disorders?
2. Why are the three gunas rather than the three humors used to determine mental and spiritual nature?
3. Why is the development of Sattva in the mind so important?
4. Why is it important to judge both the quality and humor prevalent in the mind?
5. Why is it helpful to seek the develop the sattvic side of one's constitutional humor?
6. How would you evaluate the humors and qualities prevalent in our culture today?
7. Why is it necessary to consider both the gunas and the Doshas of a person?

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PART II. LESSON 3

THE DISEASE PROCESS 1.

INCREASE, AGGRAVATION AND ALLEVIATION OF THE HUMORS

Each humor undergoes three basic stages of development as follows:

1) Increase or accumulation, "Sanchaya"
2) Aggravation or provoked state, "Prakopa"
3) Decrease or alleviation, "Prashama"

The humors are always undergoing changes, rising and falling like waves with the natural movement of time, with one humor predominant at one time, another humor at another time. Hence it is important not to allow them to increase to the point of aggravation and to keep their fluctuations mild. This is done by becoming aware of their natural development and by compensating or adjusting for it.

VATA

"Qualities such as dryness connected to heat, cause Vata to undergo accumulation. By these qualities connected with cold it is provoked. By opposite qualities like dampness connected to heat, it is alleviated."

1. INCREASE: Heat along with dryness and other Vata promoting qualities allow it to increase. Such qualities are roughness, hardness, lightness, mobility and all other Vata (windy) attributes. They cause Vata to accumulate, whereas the heat prevents them from manifesting their negative power.

2. AGGRAVATION: Cold along with these Vata qualities provokes its negative manifestation as various Vata disorders, like constipation, insomnia, arthritis etc.

3. ALLEVIATION: Heat and wetness along with the other qualities (smoothness, softness, slowness etc.) of opposite nature to Vata alleviate it in the form of various therapies like application of warm oils such as sesame.

PITTA

By qualities such as sharpness connected with cold, Pitta undergoes accumulation. By these qualities connected with heat it is provoked. By opposite qualities such as dullness connected with cold, it is alleviated.

1. INCREASE: Cold along with Pitta (bilious) qualities, like sharpness, lightness and oiliness, cause Pitta to increase. Cold keeps the other Pitta qualities from becoming provoked and hence allows them to accumulate.

2. AGGRAVATION: Heat provokes the negative manifestation of these qualities in the form of various Pitta disorders, like hyperacidity, fever or infection.

3. ALLEVIATION: Opposite attributes, like slowness or dullness, along with cold, will alleviate Pitta, as in the use of cold bitter and alterative herbs to cleanse the blood and bile.

KAPHA

By qualities such as dampness connected with cold, Kapha undergoes accumulation. By these qualities along with heat it is provoked. By opposite qualities like dryness along with heat, it is alleviated. (quotes ASHTANGA HRIDAYA I.12.19-21)

1. INCREASE: By cold and Kapha (phlegmatic) attributes like dampness, heaviness and dullness, Kapha is increased. Totally like attributes cause Kapha to become predominant.

2. AGGRAVATION: By heat and such Kapha qualities it is provoked. This is because heat has the power to stir up these heavy Kapha attributes and cause them to manifest their negative effects.

It is just like with water. Cold causes it to increase in the form of ice. Heat by melting it causes it to flood and cause damage.

3. ALLEVIATION: By anti-Kapha qualities like heat, dryness, lightness and sharpness, it is alleviated. For example, fasting along with taking of hot spices like ginger.

Hence the humors increase by an increase of like attributes. They are provoked by heat or cold, the strongest of the attributes, which have the power to stir them up. They are decreased by the application of opposite qualities.

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THE HUMORS AND THE CYCLE OF TIME

This process of development for the humors follows the cycle of time. Kapha generally marks the beginning of all time cycles, Pitta the middle and Vata the end.

This is because the first stage of all cycles involves development of form (Kapha). The middle stage involves manifestation of energy (Pitta). The last phase involves decline and divestment of form (Vata).

THE STAGES OF LIFE

KAPHA STAGE

Kapha marks the age of youth, from conception to puberty (about age 15). At this time we are still in the field of the water, the formative element. We are undergoing conception and growth. Our tissues are increasing and we are putting on weight, expanding and densifying. Emotionally, we are dependent, receptive and allow ourselves to be protected, taught and guided.

Our diet is also more Kapha with dairy products and rich foods to provide nutrients for growth. Hence most childhood diseases are of a Kapha nature, with mucus, phlegm, colds and flu and swollen glands.

PITTA STAGE

Pitta marks middle age, from puberty to the onset of old age (ages 15-50). The growth process slows down and comes to an end. Now we set out to accomplish our action and goals in life. We become aggressive, ambitious and motivated and want to do things for ourselves. The late teen period with its rebelliousness and aggressiveness, particularly among boys, shows this uprising of Pitta.

We become inclined towards more Pitta foods like spices, alcohol or red meat. Pitta disorders are more common, starting with acne and ending up with heart attacks and other manifestations of too extreme energy or willfulness in life.

VATA STAGE

Vata marks old age (after 50 and specifically after 65). The forces of decay and degeneration are set in motion. Gradually our vital fluids dry out, our vigor fails, our hair and teeth fall, our senses, our sight and hearing, are gradually diminished and our memory begins to fail. These are caused by high Vata that gradually breaks the connection of the life-force with the physical body.

Whereas youth marks the time that the life energy from the soul is entering into and forming the body, middle age marks the time wherein it has created its form or vehicle and is able to act

though it. Old age marks the time wherein the life-force must return to its subtle nature as its connection with physical matter is artificial and temporary.

On the positive side, this serves to create wisdom and detachment and allows the elderly to be the main teachers and guides in life.

SEASONAL CHANGES IN THE HUMORS

This process of increase and decrease of the humors follows the cycle of time, particularly the seasons. Unfortunately we cannot use the regular Ayurvedic view of this as it is based upon the special climate of India.

SEASONAL CHANGES IN INDIA

India is the only place in the world with six natural seasons of two months each. These are called spring, summer, the rainy season, autumn, winter and the dewy season. They mark the respective double months of March-April, May-June, July-August, September-October, November-December and January-February.

In this system, Vata is thought to increase in the summer (May-June), which is dry and hot. Pitta is increased in the rainy season (July-August) which is damp, and Kapha in the dewy season (Jan.-Feb.), which is cold and damp.

Vata is provoked in the rainy season (July-August) by the cooler weather that follows the dry heat of summer, as well as by the wind and storminess of the monsoon. Also in this season primarily light and dry food plants grow in India, hence climate and dietary factors are always linked together.

Pitta is provoked by autumn (Sept.-Oct.), which in India brings renewed heat after the rains. Kapha is provoked in spring (March-April) by the heat that liquifies it.

Vata is alleviated in autumn (Sept.-Oct.) by the return of heat. Pitta is alleviated in winter (Nov.-Dec.) which brings cold. Kapha is alleviated in the summer (May-June) which has opposite qualities to it.

SEASONAL CHANGES IN TEMPERATE REGIONS

Understanding these qualities we can apply them to other climates like our four seasonal one:

Vata relates to late autumn when cold, dry and declining energy prevail. Pitta relates to midsummer when heat is predominant. Kapha relates to early spring when water begins to liquify, as with the melting of the winter snow.

Dating them according to our four season climate, Vata is

strongest in November-December, Kapha in March-April and Pitta in July-August. This is the time of the year they are most likely to be provoked.

Hence we can divide the year into three parts according to the predomination of the three humors.

	PROVOKED	ACCUMULATING	ALLEVIATED
Feb. 1--June 1	Kapha	Pitta	Vata
June 1--Oct. 1	Pitta	Vata	Kapha
Oct. 1--Feb. 1	Vata	Kapha	Pitta

VATA

Vata accumulates in the summer and is provoked in the fall and early winter. It is alleviated in the late winter and spring with the return of moisture and heat. Hence in summer we must be careful not to become too dry, nor to follow a diet that is too light or cold (like too much fruit and too many salads) or we may aggravate Vata in the fall. We must prepare ourselves for the declining season with tonification or supplemention therapy in early fall, taking more rich and nutritive foods, as nuts, grains, oils and dairy products.

PITTA

Pitta accumulates in the late winter and spring and is provoked in the summer. It is alleviated in the fall and early winter with the return of cold and the shortening of the days. Hence in the spring we must be careful not to eat food which is too hot, spicy, oily or fried. A blood cleansing regime of green herbs, sprouts and vegetables in the spring will help stop Pitta from becoming aggravated in the summer.

KAPHA

Kapha accumulates in the fall and early winter. It is provoked in the late winter and spring. It is alleviated in the summer with the heat and sun. Hence in the winter we should be careful not to eat too much sweet, heavy, fatty or mucus forming foods, or when they liquify in the spring, we will have many Kapha disorders. In late winter we should take more spices, have a lighter diet, perhaps do some fasting, do sweats or saunas or more exercise to help prevent Kapha diseases in the spring.

The general rule is that the humors are provoked during the junctures of the seasons. The shift from spring to summer aggravates Pitta. The shift from fall to winter aggravates Vata. The shift from winter to spring aggravates Kapha. Sudden shifts in weather general serve to aggravate the Doshas, particularly Vata.

THE HUMORS AND THE TIMES OF THE DAY

In the Ayurvedic biological clock the day is divided into two parts, day and night, starting at sunrise and sunset. Day belongs more to Pitta and fire, night to Kapha and water. Hence Pitta is generally stronger or more pronounced during the day and Kapha at night.

To Vata belongs the transition points (sandhis) of dawn and dusk which are points of great change that can agitate us (derange Vata). To Pitta belongs the zenith points of noon and midnight, wherein points of power are reached. Kapha falls in between.

Each half of the day divided into three parts; the first part belongs to Kapha, the second to Pitta and the third to Vata, as the three humors always relate to beginning, middle and end in all time processes.

These times are only approximate, as it is organic rather than clock time. They should be adjusted according to the calendar and daylight savings time in the summer. Vata time ends shortly after sunrise or sunset. Pitta time begins shortly before noon and midnight. Hence in the summer when the days are longer the times belonging to the humors will be longer during the day and shorter at night. The reverse is true during the winter.

	DAY	NIGHT
KAPHA	7 am. to 11 am.	7 pm. to 11 pm.
PITTA	11 am. to 3 pm.	11 pm. to 3 am.
VATA	3 pm. to 7 pm.	3 am. to 7 am.

During the day Kapha is provoked in the morning, is alleviated at noon and accumulates in the afternoon. Pitta is accumulated in the morning, provoked at noon and alleviated in the afternoon.

Vata is alleviated in the morning, accumulates at noon and is provoked in the afternoon, particularly at sunset.

During the night Kapha is provoked in the evening, is alleviated at midnight and accumulates in the early morning.

Pitta accumulates in the evening, is provoked at midnight and alleviated in the early morning.

Vata is alleviated in the evening, accumulates at midnight and is provoked in the early morning, particularly at dawn.

Generally Kapha is more severely provoked in the morning, liquefying after its accumulation at night. Hence the use of hot spicy herbs like cayenne or black pepper (or the formula Trikatu with honey) is good first thing in the morning to relieve excess Kapha.

Generally Pitta is more provoked on a superficial level during the day, as for example with skin rashes. It is provoked at a deeper level at night, as for example, ulcers.

Vata is more provoked in the early morning, as with insomnia but often manifests as tiredness in the late afternoon.

THE HUMORS AND CLIMATES

The humors are also aggravated by climates and geographical locations of the same nature. Hence we must not only examine the individual but also the place in which they live. This is called "examination of place" (desha pariksha), which follows "examination of time" (kala pariksha), as with the stages of life and the seasons.

Three basic climates are recognized in Ayurveda Vata type (jangala), Kapha type (anupa) and Pitta type (sadharana). Vata climates are lacking in water and trees, have many slopes and are generally more wild in nature, with less people or civilization. Kapha climates have much water and trees, are level, often marshy, and usually have more people, as along rivers or the sea. Pitta climates fall in between.

Vata climates have the least amount of disease as they have less bacteria. Kapha climates have the most amount of diseases. Pitta climates again fall in between.

VATA CLIMATES

Vata tends to be higher in climates that are cold, dry, clear, light, windy and at higher elevations. A typical Vata climate in this country would be the higher desert of the southwest like Santa Fe, New Mexico, where all these factors exist. Most of the year is cool, rainfall is slight, days are mainly sunny, often windy and the elevation is high.

The high plains region from New Mexico to Montana and North Dakota (and northwards into Canada) has a similar climate, as does most of the great basin region and submontane regions in the Rocky Mountain area from northern Arizona to eastern Washington state and eastern British Columbia.

PITTA CLIMATES

Pitta tends to be higher in climates that are hot, a little wet and clear, generally at a moderate elevation. Eastern Texas away from the ocean, like the climate of Dallas, is more typical of this (except in the winter). Heat and sunny days prevail with a fair amount of moisture. Hot tropical areas are very Pitta.

KAPHA CLIMATES

Kapha tends to be elevated in climates that are cold, damp, cloudy and at low elevations or near the sea or large bodies of water. Such climates are typically found in the northeast, like New England. Rain and dampness are prevalent the entire year, winters are cold, most days are cloudy, the elevation is low and near the ocean and its fog. Much of the Great Lakes region has a similar climate, including most of eastern Canada; also the Pacific Northwest. Even a wet tropical climate, like that on the wet side of the Hawaiian Islands, is still predominately Kapha.

Dual type climates exist as well. The low desert of the southwest (like Phoenix) and most of the inland areas of California with heat and dryness combine both Pitta and Vata qualities. Pitta and Kapha climatic factors combine in Florida and the Gulf Coast region and the southeastern United States generally with heat and dampness together.

Far north areas with cold and less precipitation (although it does not always melt or evaporate) combine Vata and Kapha qualities. High mountain forests with their thin air are similar in nature. Tropical areas are usually Pitta but on islands or near water have much Kapha also.

Some climates are also more extreme than others. More inland continental climates tend to have both hotter summers and colder winters than coastal areas whose temperature is moderated by the ocean. Such climates with extreme temperature variations are going to tend to aggravate the humors more.

Chicago in the central part of this country, for example, is very hot in the summer and very cold in the winter. This will be a more unbalancing type climate than Portland Oregon, which has both milder summers and milder winters, though both are predominately Kapha climates.

This does not mean that diseases do not occur in more moderate climates. It means that in them the humors do not increase in such an obvious way, nor are they as easily provoked by outside factors.

Other climates have different type seasonal changes. Much of California, with its Mediterranean type climate has a pronounced cool and damp season on one hand, and a warm and dry season on the other, essentially a two season climate. The former gives a Kapha climate in the winter; the latter a Pitta-Vata climate in the summer.

ADJUSTING FOR CLIMATE

This does not mean that we cannot live in a climate that has the same nature as our constitution but that if we do so, we must adjust for it. In severe disorders, however, we may have to move, at least until our health is restored.

As we largely live indoors in a controlled climate it is usually not difficult to counter most effects of our geographical location. We may use an humidifier to counter the dryness of a Vata climate, an air conditioner to balance the heat of a Pitta climate and dry heat, like a wood stove, to counter Kapha locations.

Dietary or herbal methods are even more effective. In Vata climates we can use more moist foods, like dairy products and apply oil to our skin, nasal passages etc. In Pitta climates we can eat raw food and fruit juices and use herbal bitters or cooling oils like coconut or sandalwood. In Kapha climates we can use many hot spices in our cooking and do more physical work.

HOME ENVIRONMENT

We must also, therefore, be careful not to aggravate the humors by our home climate. Too high house heat can aggravate Pitta, too low can aggravate Vata and Kapha. Too much dampness in the house can aggravate Kapha and Pitta, too little can damage Vata.

Generally, our home environment will be a stronger factor than the outside climate for allowing the humors to accumulate. However, outside climatic changes are more sudden and dramatic and are more likely to provoke diseases. When the wind of early winter causes us to catch cold it is often just bringing into manifestation an accumulation of Kapha and Vata that we have allowed to occur by dietary and life-style factors.

The important thing is for us to note the qualities we most expose ourselves to in our environment, including the outdoors, our home, our place of work and other places where we spend most of our time. The qualities that predominate in these areas will tend to cause diseases of like nature, unless we compensate for them.

If we live in a hot and dry climate, frequently expose ourselves to the sun and heat, work in a hot room and do a lot of jogging, a hot exercise, we are accumulating factors that will derange Pitta. Factors that may strongly attack or strain our system, like running long on a very hot summer day, or becoming very angry (a hot emotion) may then provoke Pitta and cause a fever or other Pitta manifestation.

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IN THE DIGESTIVE PROCESS

The increase and decrease of the humors follows the states of digestion that they rule---

> Vata accumulates while the food is in the small intestine. It is provoked while the food is in the colon, its stage of digestion. It is alleviated while the food is in the stomach.

Pitta accumulates while the food is in the stomach. It is provoked while it is in the small intestine, its stage of digestion. It is alleviated when it enters into the colon.

Kapha increases while the food is in the colon. It is provoked when it is in the stomach, its stage of digestion. It is alleviated when it is in the small intestine.

Hence Kapha problems are more common immediately after eating, like nausea and vomiting. Pitta problems occur about 2 hours later as heartburn. Vata problems occur 4 hours or more later as intestinal gas.

THE DISEASE PROCESS

The humors undergo accumulation at their respective primary sites: Vata in the colon, Pitta in the small intestine and Kapha in the stomach.

At this time there arises 1) aversion to the qualities that cause them to increase.

For Vata dislike of dry, rough, light and agitated qualities arises, like sensitivity to the wind or dislike of cold, dry food. For Pitta aversion to sharp, light and oily attributes occurs, like aversion to sunlight or fried food. For Kapha aversion to oily, slimy and dull attributes. For Kapha aversion to cold, dairy products or fatty foods may arise.

At the same time 2) desire for substances and conditions of opposite quality to the humor arises.

For Vata desire for moist, soft and heavy foods may arise, like dairy products or longing for heat. For Pitta desire for cool baths, cool drinks and raw food may occur. For Kapha we may crave hot drinks and spices.

When provoked the humors move out of their site of accumulation and invade the various tissues and organs of the body causing various diseases. We will examine this phase in more detail shortly.

The humors have to be returned to their site of accumulation for them to be alleviated. This is an important principle of Ayurveda, not to be forgotten. In other words, to alleviate the humors we must reverse the movement that caused them to be provoked.

In this way the humors accumulate like water, until like a flood bursting a dam and pouring over the land they can cause great damage. Little by little, like the receding of a flood, they can be alleviated.

SUMMARY/ WEIGHING OF FACTORS THAT AGGRAVATE THE HUMORS

The following shows the priority of factors in aggravating the humors and is general in nature.

1. Our constitutional humor (prakriti) will outweigh environmental factors (vikriti) in causing diseases.

Hence Vata people will tend to have Vata diseases even when they live in a Kapha climate, though the nature of the climate will moderate them somewhat.

Vata people will also tend towards Vata diseases even in the summer, a Pitta time of the year, though the Pitta nature of the season will be a moderating factor.

2. Life-style factors will outweigh environmental factors in causing diseases.

Hence a person who is overly active, travels a lot, does not get enough sleep, eats irregularly and otherwise follows a very Vata life-style will tend to Vata disorders. This remains true even if they do not live in a Vata climate and are not in a Vata season (though, again these factors will have a moderating affect on their disorders, which will be worse in a Vata season or Vata climate).

3. What we take internally will outweigh what we expose ourselves to externally as disease causing factors.

Hence diet is a more important factor in the increase and decrease of the humors, than is climate or season. This is particularly true in the modern world where we are far more insulated from environmental changes than traditional cultures like India.

4. Mental and emotional factors will outweigh physical factors in causing disease.

Excess of anger, for example, will tend to aggravate Pitta even if we are not Pitta predominant in constitution or in a Pitta climate or season. Hence if a Pitta person has much anger he will still be prone to Pitta diseases even if Pitta causing factors of an external nature are avoided (these, however, will moderate its affects).

As human beings we are primarily creatures of the mind. Our body is just the vehicle for manifesting our thoughts. Though the body does not respond to our immediate thoughts, its condition is still the product of our deeper and long term mental nature.

5. The DEGREE of these factors must also be considered.

If we are lost in a cold wilderness area for several days, with prolonged exposure to cold and lack of food, this is going to very likely cause severe Vata aggravation regardless of the other factors.

Also regularity must be considered. Whatever is done consistently on a daily basis will tend to have a strong effect in time.

6. The overall rule is that the more these factors of constitution, life-style, season and environment combine, the more likely are we to aggravate the humors.

Hence if we are a Vata person with a Vata life-style and diet, in a Vata time, season and climate, and with a Vata frame of mind (like much anxiety) the stage may be set for the onset of a very severe Vata disorder, like arthritis or a degenerative nervous system disorder like paralysis.

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PART II. LESSON 3

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What are the three stages of development of the humors?
2. What factors cause them to increase, become aggravated and alleviated?
3. How do the humors relate to the divisions of the day?
4. How do they relate to the seasons of the year?
5. How do they relate to the stages of life?
6. How do the humors relate to different climates?
7. How do they relate to the digestive process?
8. How do inner and outer factors compare in their power to aggravate the humors?

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PART II. LESSON 4

THE DISEASE PROCESS 2.

OJAS/ THE ESSENTIAL ENERGY OF THE IMMUNE SYSTEM

We have discussed Ojas in part already. Ojas is the essential energy reserve of the body. It literally means "vigor". It is the subtle essence of the reproductive and all the vital secretions. It is a special Ayurvedic concept of a source fluid that underlies all our psycho-physical capacities.

Ojas is not a physical substance. It is the sap of our life energy and exists on a subtle level in the heart chakra. When it is sufficient there is health. When it is deficient there is disease. Disease strikes at the locations where it is weak. In modern terms we could say that it is something like the essential energy of the immune system.

Ojas is defined as "the ultimate essence of the reproductive fluids and the heat of the tissues. Located in the heart, it pervades the entire body, giving stability and support. It is moist, of the nature of nectar (Soma), transparent, a little red and yellow. When it is destroyed one dies; when it is sustained, one lives."

"Ojas is decreased by such factors as anger, hunger, worry, sorrow and overwork. Then one experiences fear, lack of strength, one constantly worries, with disturbed senses. Lacking in lustre, weak in mind, one wastes away. Such qualities as patience and faith disappear."

Other factors that decrease Ojas include excessive or unnatural sexual activity and the use of drugs or stimulants, as well as stress, anxiety, devitalized food, pollution, unnatural environment and unrighteous life-style. In short, most of the excesses of modern culture and unregulated technology tend to deplete Ojas.

Ojas is replenished by special foods like milk, ghee (clarified butter) or honey, and by special tonic herbs like ashwagandha (Withania somnifera), kapikacchu (Mucuna pruriens) and shatavari (Asparagus racemosus). Practices like meditation, pranayama, mantras like Om or Ram and sexual moderation are also helpful, as Ojas is essentially sattvic (pure) in nature. Purification of the heart and positive attitudes of faith, peace, love, compassion and contentment also strengthen it, as well as rest, time in nature and opening to the cosmic life force.

When low, Ojas causes chronic, degenerative diseases, as well as mysterious and hard to treat infectious and nervous disorders. The modern disease Aids has all the symptoms of a disease of low Ojas. Less severe chronic low energy conditions are often also related specifically to low Ojas, including chronic low grade infections like epstein bar virus or chronic hepatitis. Ojas decreases with age and the diseases of old age reflect low Ojas, just as low Ojas causes premature aging.

Low Ojas also weakens the emotions and causes negative attitudes and emotions, anxiety, depression, apathy, resignation, self-pity and generally self-destructive and suicidal tendencies, many of the qualities of extreme Vata.

THE THREE HUMORS AND THE DISEASE PROCESS

According to Ayurveda, the disease process can be summarized in a simple way. The humors undergo increase by aggravating factors (diet, climate, seasons, life-style, emotions etc. of like nature). This causes weakening of the digestive fire (agni). Excess Kapha blocks the digestive fire by its cold and damp nature, excess Vata by its cold and variable nature, excess Pitta by its oily nature (which like hot water can still put out a fire).

This weakened digestion in turn allows an undigested food mass (Ama) to arise. This with the increased humor accumulates at its site. When provoked it moves out and blocks the channels and becomes deposited in any weakened site in the body, from which the disease manifests.

Ayurveda recognizes six stages in the disease process according to the development and movement of the aggravated humors. These are called

1. Accumulation (sanchaya)
2. Aggravation (prakopa)
3. Overflow (prasara)
4. Relocation (sthana samsraya)
5. Manifestation (vyakti)
6. Diversification (bheda)

The first two refer to the increase of the humors in their respective sites. We have already discussed them in the general process of increase and decrease of the humors. The second four show their spread to different parts of the body and relate more to specific diseases.

1. ACCUMULATION

The humors begin to increase in their respective locales. Causes include wrong diet, seasonal maladjustments, wrong life style, psychological disturbance and all the usual factors that increase the particular humor, most of which we have already discussed. The symptoms listed below are still mild at this stage.

Vata (air or wind) begins to accumulate in the colon causing distention, gas, constipation, insomnia, fear, fatigue, dryness and seeking of warmth.

Pitta (fire or bile) begins to accumulate in the small intestine producing burning sensation, fever, hyperacidity, bitter taste in the mouth, yellow coloring of urine and stool, desire for cold things, irritability and anger.

Kapha (water or phlegm) begins to accumulate in the stomach resulting in lassitude, heaviness, pallor, bloating, indigestion and desire for light food.

2. AGGRAVATION

The humors continue to increase in their respective sites and bring about an increase in the strength of the symptoms manifested there and by the pressure of this accumulation, reflected symptoms elsewhere in the body.

Vata causes light-headedness, increased constipation, abdominal pain or spasms, further accumulation of gas with borborygmus, along with upper abdominal distention.

Pitta causes increased acidity, acid regurgitation, burning pain in the abdomen, excessive thirst, loss of strength and difficulty sleeping.

Kapha causes loss of appetite, indigestion, nausea and increased salivation, heaviness in the head and heart and excess sleeping.

3. OVERFLOW

The humors have now filled up their respective sites and begin to overflow into the rest of the body. They enter into the plasma and blood and spread out of the g.i. tract. The humors are no longer localized and can now penetrate into the organs and tissues of the body causing various damage and allowing various diseases to arise. The symptoms, however, are still general and have not yet become localized.

They move in different directions causing various disorders and dysfunctions. The nature and location of these complications depends upon the direction the humors move (potentially they can move in any direction, up, down, to one side or the other, but will go the way it is easiest for them to travel). They come into close contact with the tissues and waste materials of the body and become mixed with them. Worsening of symptoms at their respective sites will also occur.

Vata causes dry skin, pain or stiffness of the joints, lower back pain, convulsions, spasm, headache, dry cough, intermittent fever, as well as continued abdominal pain with constipation and painful bowel movements and general fatigue.

Pitta causes inflammatory skin diseases, conjunctivitis, gingivitis, dizziness, headache, high fever, bilious vomiting, as well as diarrhea with burning sensation.

Kapha causes cough, difficult breathing or gasping for air, swollen glands, low grade fever, vomiting, swelling of the joints and mucus in the stools.

4. RELOCATION

The humors now relocate themselves in particular sites in the body. Through the bloodstream having entered into the tissues they form a new site of disease symptoms of a more specific nature.

Usually those which are weak or vulnerable are the ones taken. For example, in arthritis, they would redeposit themselves in the joints and accumulate there. The symptoms now tend to become more fixed in location, whereas in the overflow state they tend to move around and fluctuate.

5. MANIFESTATION

Now the humors manifest specific symptom complexes at these particular sites. We can now identify the diseases as asthma, diabetes, arthritis or whatever they happen to be. The symptoms of these diseases are initial but specific and no longer just that of the humors in their movement.

6. DIVERSIFICATION

At these particular sites the humors manifest their special characteristics. The disease can be identified according to the attributes of the three humors it possesses.

For example, Vata (air) type arthritis will evidence severe pain, cold, stiffness, dry skin and constipation. Pitta (fire) type

will show fever, burning sensation, red swelling of the joints and loose stool. Kapha (water) will demonstrate swelling, edema, phlegm and congestion.

The disease undergoes its own characteristic development and changing of symptoms. Arthritis, for example, will develop as degeneration of the bones and the joints.

Accumulation of the humors is thus like the growth of a seed. Like a seed it is redeposited at a weak location in the body where it grows into a tree and exhibits the fully developed symptom complex of a disease.

THE SIX STAGES OF DISEASE AND TREATMENT

The general rule in treatment is that it is always easier to treat the humors while they are still located in their respective sites. The stages of accumulation and aggravation, therefore, are still easier to cure. The stage of overflow is the transitional stage.

At the relocation phase only the preliminary symptoms of the disease are in evidence and vitality is still strong, so treatment is still not that difficult but must be persevering.

The last two stages present a fully developed disease. The disease has matured and will take time and effort to rectify. It has become part of our nature and life and requires a major change of our life-style to reduce it. Fully developed diseases usually take some months of natural therapies to greatly alleviate or cure, as the life-force is already disrupted by the disease and may be mixed up with it.

It should be noted in this regard, that *all diseases can be treated at the site of accumulation of the humor which causes them.* Hence even if we cannot differentiate the stage, degree and diversification of the disease, if we can at least ascertain its humoral basis, we can still treat it in an effective though general manner.

The accumulation phase is the root of all diseases. As long as the humor accumulates it will get worse. Hence if we stop its accumulation we can relieve it in time, even if it has progressed far beyond this stage.

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THE THREE DISEASE PATHWAYS

Three pathways for diseases are differentiated:

1. Outer
2. Inner
3. Central

INNER DISEASE PATHWAY

The "inner disease pathway" (antar marga) consists of the digestive tract from the mouth to the anus.

This pathway is called inner not because it occurs inside the tissues and organs but because the digestive tract forms a channel through the inside of the body. Hence do not be confused by the term inner to think that this pathway has something to do with the mind or the deeper tissues. It does not.

Diseases here are easy to treat as it is possible to dispel them out of the body directly through the digestive tract, which is the main route for eliminating all toxins. They include mainly diseases of the digestive tract.

The humors reside here in their states of accumulation and provocation but can also spread and become deposited in other sites within it.

OUTER DISEASE PATHWAY

The "outer disease pathway" (bahya marga) is said to include the plasma (skin) and blood, the superficial tissues. They are outer as they tend to occur more on the exterior of the body. Diseases here are more difficult to treat as they have already entered into the tissues. These include skin diseases, lymphatic problems and toxic blood conditions.

The humors enter this pathway in their overflow state and can be redeposited here as well.

Though this is called the outer disease pathway, it is deeper or more internal to the tissues than the inner disease pathway.

CENTRAL DISEASE PATHWAY

The "central disease pathway" (madhyama marga) consists of the deeper tissues of muscle, fat, bone, bone marrow and nerve tissue, and reproductive tissue. It is literally called the "middle disease pathway" because it occurs between the outer pathway, the skin, and the inner, the g.i. tract, not because it is of moderate nature in the diseases it causes.

The most sensitive points and organs of the body are affected here like the head, heart, bladder, genitals, joints and bones.

Diseases here are the most deep seated and the most difficult to treat. Most severe, chronic and degenerative diseases come from this area, everything from cancer to arthritis. The humors get into this area only after having spread through the superficial tissues. Diseases here show a penetration of toxins into the deepest tissues of the body.

The outer and central disease pathways make up the seven tissues of the body. The first two, skin and blood, as the outer and the next five, muscle, fat, bone, marrow and reproductive fluid, the middle.

Generally Kapha diseases are more mild and affect mainly the inner pathway, the digestive tract, though many of them also affect the plasma. Pitta diseases are moderate in affects and damage mainly the outer pathway, particularly the blood. Vata diseases are most severe and tend to damage the deeper tissues, particularly the bones and nerves.

MOVEMENT OF THE HUMORS THROUGH THE DISEASE PATHWAYS

The factors which cause diseases to move from the digestive tract to the tissues are "excessive exercise, too much hot or sharp food, wrong life-regime and by being transported by Vata." These make it for the humors to be more easily transported into the tissues, as they open up the channels for the disease factors to enter them.

They move back from the inner tissues back to the digestive tract by "purification of the openings of the channels", particularly by oleation and sweating therapies, as well as by the control of Vata (breath-control, pranayama) and right life-regime. These open the channels for the disease factors to be drained from them.

CLASSIFICATION OF DISEASE

Diseases are of two levels, physical and mental. The latter generally outweighs and causes the former, though the former can also influence the latter.

Diseases are considered to be twofold as owing to exogenous or endogenous factors. Exogenous diseases include mainly exposure to the elements, like heat or cold, wind or rain, or by injury. Endogenous diseases are owing to humor imbalances or psychological factors (rajas and tamas in the mind). Most diseases are endogenous in nature, as endogenous imbalances make us prey to exogenous factors.

Diseases are also twofold as caused by others or self-caused. Diseases caused by others are largely exogenous and may be due to the elements or negative actions of other people, like violence. Diseases caused by ourselves include those owing to the humors (physical) and gunas (psychological).

Diseases are also twofold as caused by physiological or spiritual factors. Physiological factors are the three humors. Spiritual factors are wrong karma, which may stem from a previous incarnation. It is not usually amenable to purely physical remedies. Many diseases combine both factors.

PHASES OF DISEASE

Each disease has four factors, which in turn lead to two possible results:

1. A cause (hetu)
2. Preliminary or prodromal signs (purvarupa)
3. Primary or cardinal signs (rupa)
4. Pathological changes (samprapti)

5. Relief (upasaya)
6. Aggravation (anupasaya)

The cause of disease lies in the factors that increase the humors. The preliminary signs manifest between the stages of overflow and deposition. They are mainly the signs of the excess humors trying to relocate themselves in a specific site. The primary signs manifest with the manifestation stage. After this point the disease may get better or worse.

THE FIVE WAYS OF KNOWING A DISEASE

These also relate to the five ways of knowing a disease (pancha nidana). These are through its 1. cause, 2. preliminary signs, 3. primary signs, 4. pathological changes and 5. its means of relief. These are the first five factors listed above.

In this regard, even treatment can be a form of diagnosis. If we try a remedy to alleviate a condition and it does not work, it still serves to give us better knowledge as to what the condition is. Such preliminary or exploratory treatments are part of all systems of medicine.

Hence we need not feel bad if our diagnosis or treatment is not always completely correct, if we can learn from it. The important thing is that it leads us to a greater understanding of the disease. Hence in the beginning of treatment it is often good to try exploratory treatments. This is to give tentatively, in a short term, reduced manner or lower dosage what you think may improve the condition. With such a limited application only enough of the therapy is given to see if it helps the patient, but not enough is given to harm the patient if it is the wrong method to us.

The important thing again is to ascertain the degree and attributes of the aggravating humor.

THE FOUR QUARTERS OF TREATMENT

The four quarters of treatment are
1. The physician
2. The nurse or physician's assistant
3. The remedy
4. the patient

If any of these are deficient the treatment will not succeed. The physician must be knowledgeable, experienced and practical in approach. The remedy must be appropriate to the disease, taken in the right manner, in the right dosage and for the right period of time. The nurse must also be competent and compassionate. The patient must have faith in the treatment and the means to carry it out (which often unfortunately requires material resources to pay for the treatment).

For the more general therapies of Ayurveda appropriate in this country a nurse is not necessary. That role can also go under that of the physician if he is doing all the work.

THE FOUR PROGNOSES OF DISEASE

Diseases may be
1. Easy to cure
2. Difficult to cure
3. Not curable but in which the symptoms can be relieved or reduced
4. Incurable

Diseases are easy to cure if they are of different nature than the predominant constitutional humor, for example, a Kapha disease like a common cold in a Pitta constitution.

They are easy to cure if they do not involve tissues and waste materials of the same nature as the humor and are not reinforced by climate, season, work or other environmental factors.

The symptoms should be mild, the condition new (not a disease that one has had a number of times previously), and the patient should have the resources and motivation to follow the therapy completely. The disease should be confined to one humor, to one channel and to one disease pathway, preferably the inner pathway or digestive tract.

Diseases are difficult to cure if they are of the same nature as the constitution, as a Vata condition like arthritis in a Vata person. Also if they are reinforced by outer conditions, if the symptoms are severe, if the condition is recurring and if the disease involves more than one humor or channel, and has entered into the outer or middle disease pathways.

Diseases of pregnant women, young children, the elderly or those in convalescence from another disease also fall here, as they do not possess the vitality to fight strong disease attacks. Lack of resources or motivation from the patient makes a condition more difficult to treat as well.

Diseases for which only symptomatic relief can be provided include those which are congenital, chronic and degenerative (like rheumatoid arthritis in a very old person) and those which require or have had surgery or have already brought about some severe tissue damage (like loss of an organ or deformation of the bones).

They usually affect the deeper tissues and involve contradictory signs and mutually reinforcing conditions. Often the vitality or Ojas of the patient is too low to be able to be adequately built up again. Or the patient may only be willing or able to do more than a small part of the treatment.

Diseases that are incurable are those that involve all the humors, which affect the deeper tissues in a radical way, in which the vitality and Ojas has already collapsed, and in which there are signs of imminent death, or in which the patient has given up their will to live. Cancer that has metastasized is often of this nature.

Hence we see that Ayurveda does not claim to be able to cure all disease, nor that all diseases are curable. As the body is a material structure and produced by time, once this structure is damaged in a radical way, or once the cumulative effect of time has reached a certain threshold, the momentum of the disease may be irreversible.

Generally we will be treating conditions that are curable or palliatable. Severe diseases usually require hospitalization and involve taking on a legal risk. To be an effective practitioner does not require being able to treat the most extreme illnesses but to know how to prevent the humors from accumulating in the first place.

Actually disease is part of life and we will all eventually succumb to and die by one disease or another. The purpose of the healer is to prolong and optimize our life but there are limits to this process, particularly in our culture that is out of harmony with nature.

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PART II. LESSON 4

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. How does Ojas protect the body?
2. What are the signs of low Ojas?
3. What are the six stages of disease?
4. Trace the six stages of disease of each of the humors.
5. What triggers the disease process?
6. What are the three disease pathways?
7. Why are diseases of the central pathway the most dangerous?
8. What are the four prognoses of disease?

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PART II. LESSON 5

EXAMINATION OF DISEASE 1.

Just as we must learn to determine the constitutional type of the individual, so we must also be able to ascertain the specific nature and type of the diseases they may be suffering from. This we call "examination of disease", VIKRITI PARIKSHA. Diseases are usually but not always the same as the underlying humor.

Moreover, to treat diseases we must learn to ascertain their location, stage and strength as already noted.

THE HUMORS AS SITES OF DISEASE

The humors as the underlying forces of the body are not only the factors which cause disease. They are also the sites wherein disease occurs. These relate to the tissues, organs and systems that they rule.

The humors when too high tend to damage each other. They eventually all become imbalanced. Hence we must carefully discriminate the humors causing the disease process and those which may be only part of or the site of the disease process.

Diseases involving the nervous system show Vata (wind) as the site of the disorder. Diseases of this system ruled by Vata will be more commonly Vata but may be of a Pitta or Kapha nature. In the latter cases Vata is not to be blamed. Vata is innocent. Vata is merely the site of Pitta or Kapha disorders. However, we must not forget Vata as the site of the disease, any more than the nature of the humor which causes it. Hence in treating nervous system disorders, even those caused by Pitta and Kapha, we may have to treat aspects of Vata as well.

Usually, a humor will aggravate the factors it rules; that is, it will be both the site as well as the causative factor in the disease process.

Thus high Kapha (phlegm) tends to damage the lungs, a Kapha organ. But an excess humor may take as its disease site, another humor. This often indicates a more severe condition, in which the humor has already damaged its own sites and is part of the stage of spreading or overflow.

For example, high Kapha, after damaging the lungs, may then damage the nervous system, as in asthmatic wheezing or epilepsy due to phlegm blocking the subtle channels, thus affecting Vata.

All the humors will eventually tend to damage Vata or create diseases of the bones, nervous system and mind, as Vata rules the deeper tissues and energies of the body.

The humors affect each other and in more severe diseases, like cancer, all three humors may be out of balance, rendering treatment extremely complicated.

EXCESS STATES OF THE HUMORS

To identify the diseases of the humors, we must be able to recognize their attributes. According to Ayurvedic source books the classical symptoms of the aggravated or elevated humors are as follows---

VATA

> Vata's actions when aggravated are collapse, spasms, piercing pain, numbness, depression, breaking, striking and biting pain, constipation, cracking of the joints, contraction, retention of waste materials in the body, excitability, thirst, trembling, roughness of skin, porosity of tissues, dehydration, agitated movement, stiffness, astringent taste in mouth, and dark or reddish brown discolorations.

We see in all these the drying, disruptive and agitating powers of the wind and the derangement of nerve impulses. Tissue deficiency combines with excess movement and hypersensitivity.

PITTA

> Pitta's actions when aggravated are burning sensation, redness, feeling hot, boils, sweating, pus formation, bleeding, necrosis, exhaustion, fainting, inebriation, pungent and sour taste in the mouth and all colors but white and brown.

We see in all these the burning, boiling and fermenting action of fire.

KAPHA

> Kapha when aggravated creates phlegm, hardness of tissues, itching, cold sensation on the skin, heaviness, congestion, obesity, edema, indigestion, excessive sleeping, white color, and sweet and salty tastes in the mouth which take time to notice. (quotes, Ashtanga Hridaya XII. 49-54)

All these reflect the heaviness, torpor and stagnation of water.

DEFICIENT STATES OF THE HUMORS

The humors when deficient are not so significant in causing disease but it is important still to know their signs to help identify the nature of conditions. The symptoms of the humors when low or deficient are as follows---

VATA

> Vata when low causes lassitude of the limbs, deficiency of speech and enthusiasm, confusion of perception, as well as increase in phlegm along with production of toxins (ama)."

Vata (air) when low resembles high Kapha (water). There is lack of movement, along with dullness and heaviness, reduced sensitivity and sensation.

PITTA

> Pitta when insufficient causes weakness of the digestive fire, cold and lack of lustre.

Pitta when low resembles high Vata and Kapha both. The attribute of cold is most elevated with degenerated metabolism, poor appetite and poor circulation.

KAPHA

> Kapha when low results in a feeling of emptiness in the stomach, palpitations and loosening of the joints. (Ashtanga Hridaya XI. 14-16)

Kapha when low resembles high Vata. Stability and firmness in the tissues is reduced and the mind and emotions also become ungrounded.

Disease is thought to be primarily caused by the humors that are too high or aggravated. Those that are too low are usually not regarded as possessing the strength to do cause disease.

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The following list, in a more comprehensive way, gives the symptoms that each of the three humors most commonly shows. These can be added to the factors of constitutional examination for greater clarity.

Examination of pulse, tongue, abdomen, as well as questioning the patient should be done thoroughly (see the diagnostic section of the course).

SYMPTOMS OF AGGRAVATED DOSHAS----

PAIN

V----most severe; throbbing, biting, churning, beating, tearing, variable, migratory, colicky, intermittent
P----medium; burning, steaming
K----least; heavy, dull, constant

Pain is perhaps the chief characteristic of all disease. As Vata diseases tend to be more severe, they involve more pain. Strong, sharp, shocking and disruptive pain is the chief characteristic in Vata disorders.

For Pitta pain is usually associated with swelling, bleeding or burning sensation; for Kapha with feelings of dullness, heaviness, congestion or stagnation.

Pain is most severe when there is a blockage of the channels and a wrong movement in the channels.

FEVER

V----moderate temperature, variable or irregular fever, thirst, anxiety, restlessness
P----highest temperature, burning sensation, thirst, sweating, irritability, delirium
K----low grade fever, dullness, heaviness, constant temperature

Fever is the foremost of all diseases and in traditional cultures the main killer. Fever is more significant in Pitta disorders and is their main characteristic, along with other heat sensations like inflammation, infection and burning sensation.

Acute fever is more Pitta. Constant fever at low temperature is more Kapha. Irregular, intermittent or variable fever is more Vata.

EXCESS DISCHARGES

V----gas, sound
P----bleeding, yellow pus, bile
K----mucus, whitish pus, water, salivation

The main characteristic of Kapha disorders is excess discharges particularly phlegm, water (as in watery skin sores or rashes) and pus, mainly whitish in color. Pitta also brings in an increase of discharges, including sweating, bile in the system, bleeding and pus (toxins in the blood). Vata has the least discharges as it is more subtle in nature, mainly intestinal gas or other noises, cracking of the joints, or moaning and sighing, which are all discharges of Vata.

COLOR (as in complexion, discharges, discolorations)
V----black, brown, blue black, blue, pink, decrease or absence of normal color
P----red, purple, yellow, green, black, smoky
K----white, pale

Pitta causes bright discolorations, Vata dark discolorations and Kapha generally pale discoloration. The color of Pitta usually reflects excess bile or blood. The color of Kapha reflects excess water or phlegm; that of Vata reflects excess gas or decay of tissues. Discolorations are more typical of Pitta disorders.

MOUTH
V----astringent taste, dry
P----bitter or pungent taste, increased salivation
K----sweet or salty taste, profuse salivation, mucoid discharges

High Vata dries out the mouth. Pitta causes thirst and burning sensation with possible greasiness in the mouth. Kapha causes increased salivation or mucous in the mouth.

THROAT
V----dry, rough, pain and constriction of esophagus
P----sore throat, inflammation, burning sensation
K----swelling, dilation, edema

Vata causes dry throat and difficult swallowing. Pitta causes swelling sore throat. Kapha causes accumulation of mucus in the throat.

STOMACH
V----decreased secretions, irregular appetite, frequent eructation (belching, hiccup), sense of constriction
P----excessive appetite, sour or pungent eructation, burning sensation, ulcers, cancer
K----slow digestion, sweet or mucoid eructation

Heart burn, hyperacidity or burning stomach pain relates to Pitta. Nausea, feeling of heaviness and vomiting are more characteristic of Kapha or eating too much Kapha food. Vata causes irregular peristalsis.

LIVER AND GALL BLADDER
V----dry, rough, scanty secretions, irregular activity
P----soft, excessive bile production, gall stones, inflammation, abscesses, increased activity
K----enlarged, heavy, firm, scanty bile, decreased activity

Most pain in the liver and gall bladder area is due to high Pitta. Kapha causes heaviness and stagnation in the area. Vata causes dryness and atrophy.

INTESTINES
V----dry, peristalsis disorders, distention, gas, constipation
P----profuse secretions, quick peristalsis, inflammation, ulceration, abscess, tumors, cancer, bleeding, perforation
K----mucus coating, slow peristalsis, obstruction, distention, edema, tumors

Intestinal gas and irregular movements relate to Vata. Inflammation and bleeding relates to Pitta. Heaviness, congestion and phlegm relates to Kapha.

FECES
V----constipation, painful and difficult bowel movements, dry, small in quantity
P----diarrhea, watery stools, quick or uncontrollable evacuation, burning sensation, increased frequency, moderate amount
K----solid, decreased frequency, large amount, containing mucus, with itching

In Vata diseases constipation and gas always tend to occur, along with nervousness, dryness and lack of vitality. In Pitta diseases diarrhea is more common, often with burning sensations. In Kapha mucus discharges generally increase, along with slower and more difficult elimination.

URINE
V----scanty, difficult to discharge, increased frequency or absence of urination, colorless
P----profuse, with burning sensation, increased frequency, yellow, turbid, brown or red in color
K----profuse, decreased frequency, mucoid, white or pale

Pitta diseases usually bring on increased urination along with thirst. Vata diseases have scanty, difficult urination with thirst. Kapha diseases have thickening of the urine as other discharges.

SWEAT
V----scanty, irregular, inability
P----profuse, hot
K----moderate, constant

Vata diseases cause poor peripheral circulation and lack of lubrication to the skin. Pitta diseases bring about sweating to relieve heat. Kapha diseases may increase sweating as water overflowing the tissues.

MIND AND SENSES
V----delusion, fear, apathy, sorrow, loss of consciousness, insomnia, desire for hot and hatred of cold things
P----weakness of senses, intoxication, restlessness, violent emotions, delirium, loss of sleep, dizziness, fainting, desire for cold things
K----slow perception, lack of desire, lethargy, stupor, excessive sleeping, desire for hot things

Vata types tend to lose coordination of the senses and calm of mind, along with restlessness, ungroundedness, disorientation and anxiety. Pitta types feel agitated, with heat in the head, dizziness, difficult or painful vision. Kapha types become dull, unresponsive and inert.

ONSET OF DISEASE
V----rapid, variable, irregular
P----medium, with fever
K----slow, constant

Vata types can quickly come down with diseases or quickly experience changes in their condition. Pitta diseases start with high fevers. Kapha diseases develop slowly out of congestion and stagnation.

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SAMA AND NIRAMA CONDITIONS

The conditions of the humors varies according to whether they are influenced by toxic accumulations in the body (Ama).

Ama is the undigested food mass that accumulates in the digestive tract. It is evidenced mainly by lack of taste and appetite, indigestion, bad breath, thick tongue coating, expectoration of sticky phlegm or saliva, distention of the chest or abdomen with pain on palpation, general feeling of heaviness, tiredness or lack of strength, and dullness of the mind and senses. Other symptoms include accumulation of waste materials in the body, such as constipation, inability to sweat or difficult urination, and blockage of the channels, along with a deep, dull or slippery pulse.

Ama is much like Kapha. It is cold, damp, heavy, thick and sticky to an even greater degree. It is also turbid and tends to ferment. It is aggravated by dietary factors like animal products, by heavy or mucus forming foods, by oil massage or any application of pressure and by cloudy weather. It combines itself with the humors and modifies their attributes.

Usually Ama is involved with the accumulation of the humors at their respective sites and serves to begin the disease process. Hence all diseases can be said to be owing to Ama. But as the humors enter into the deeper tissues Ama formation may cease to be a problem. In any case in order to cleanse the humors from the deeper tissues, Ama must first be eliminated. The Ayurvedic rule of treatment is to turn a condition from its Ama to non-Ama state and then discharge the excess humor from the body.

Ama conditions of the humors are called "Sama" ("sa" means with and is added to "ama"). Conditions of the humors without Ama are called "Nirama" ("nir" means without).

There are as many diseases of a Nirama as of a Sama nature. Nirama conditions, however, are simpler to treat as a preliminary treatment to remove the Ama is not required as it is in Sama conditions.

Ama combines with Vata to create feelings of dullness, heaviness and fullness, along with regular Vata syndromes.

Ama combines with Pitta to create feelings of heaviness, dullness, more dampness and less heat than regular Pitta symptoms.

Ama combines with Kapha to increase its attributes generally and to make them more toxic or turbid in nature.

VATA

Sama Vata is evidenced by brown tongue coating, particularly at the back of the tongue, bad breath, abdominal pain, distention, gas and constipation. There will be feelings of heaviness, dullness and fatigue, along with disorientation.

Nirama Vata is indicated by absence of tongue coating, with dry or cracked tongue, normal appetite, no constipation, mouth dry with astringent taste, thirst, dehydration, light and dry body with more emaciation but less heaviness and fatigue.

PITTA

Sama Pitta is evidenced by yellow tongue coating, often greasy in nature, bad breath, little thirst, loss of appetite, bitter or sour taste in the mouth, tightness in the abdomen, mild burning sensations, yellow color to the urine and feces, and cloudy perception.

Nirama Pitta is indicated by excess appetite and thirst, by red or inflamed tongue without tongue coating, strong burning sensations, urine and feces normal, clear or overly acute perception and often some tissue depletion.

KAPHA

Sama Kapha is indicated by thick white tongue coating, perhaps covered with mucus also, with mucus in the saliva and salty or sour taste in the mouth. The throat and sinuses may be blocked or congested. The chest will be congested, tight and painful. There will be mucus in the stools and urine. Mucus will be thick, sticky, white in color and difficult to expectorate.

Nirama Kapha is shown by normal appetite, lack of pronounced tongue coating, sweet taste in the mouth, no mucus in the stool or urine, no pain on palpation. The mucus will be clear, watery and easy to discharge.

AMA-FEVER

When Ama ferments it creates heat and fever (called "Amajvara", Ama-fever). Symptoms of Ama combine with elevated body temperature, inflammation, infections, pus formation.

Generally Ama and Ojas are opposite in nature. The former is the source and repository of decay and disease. The latter is the source and repository of life and healing.

(see also YOGA OF HERBS, pp. 44-48)

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PART II. LESSON 5

STUDY EXERCISE

Examine the symptoms in the following three diseases, hepatitis, arthritis and diabetes, including organs and systems affected. Which humors do you think are most involved in these diseases?

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. How are the humors the sites of disease, as well as the cause?
2. What are some main diagnostic indications of a Vata disease?
3. What are some main indications of a Pitta disease?
4. What are some main indications of a Kapha disease?
5. How do Vata diseases affect the mind and senses?

6. What is an Ama condition generally?
7. How do Sama and Nirama Pitta differ?

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PART II. LESSON 6

EXAMINATION OF DISEASE 2.
THE HUMORS AND TISSUES IN THE DISEASE PROCESS

In Ayurveda there are generally recognized to be 80 Vata diseases, 40 Pitta diseases and 20 Kapha diseases. Vata causes the greatest number and most severe diseases, Kapha the least, with Pitta in its usual median role.

It is also important to classify diseases according to which tissue the humor has entered into.

Generally speaking, the deeper into the tissues the humors go, the greater the damage they cause. Their accumulation occurs in the inner disease pathway (antar marga) or digestive tract. From there they move into the outer disease pathway (bahya marga), the plasma and blood. This gives them access to the central disease pathway (madhyama marga) where they can enter the deep tissues and vital organs and cause debilitating or life threatening disorders.

Hence diseases in deeper tissues like bone, marrow or reproductive fluid are difficult to treat, and in the last tissue, the reproductive, are most severe and often involve the collapse of Ojas and the immune system, as we have already indicated.

VATA

Vata moves from its site of accumulation in the large intestine and enters into the seven tissues via the bloodstream.

1. PLASMA: Vata in the plasma (rasa gata Vata) vitiates the skin. It causes dry skin, along with roughness or cracking and black and brown skin discoloration.

Additional symptoms include stopping of sweating, tightness and thinness of the skin, coldness of the skin and weakening of peripheral circulation, along with pricking pain, itching or numbness of the skin.

This causes such diseases as dry skin diseases, psoriasis, eczema, dry scabies, also more severe influenza and dry cough and Vata type fevers.

2. BLOOD: Vata in the blood (rakta gata Vata) damages and dries out the blood and blood vessels.

It causes poor circulation, with prominent or varicose veins,

easy bruising, palpitations, blood clots and hardening of the arteries. Additional symptoms include cold extremities and slow healing of sores or wounds or slow ripening of boils.

This produces such disease conditions as varicose veins, gout, heart diseases and hypertension.

3. MUSCLE: Vata entering into the muscles (mamsa gata Vata) dries them out and depletes them.

It causes emaciation, muscle weakness and wasting away of the muscles. It also causes muscle rigidity, spasms, tremors or twitching and cramping pain in the muscles, sometimes paralysis.

The extremities will feel heavy and there will be lack of coordination and flexibility in movement. Such diseases as various forms of muscle paralysis or dry, hard tumors in the muscles (myoma) occur in this way.

4. FAT: Vata in the fat or adipose tissue (medo gata Vata) will also dry it and deplete it.

It causes emaciation, depletion of fat, dry skin, inability to sweat, sinking of the eyes, thirst and lower back pain. The spleen or kidneys may become enlarged. Diabetes (Vata type) may occur or other wasting diseases (like T.B.). Fatty tumors (lipoma), generally small, dry or hard, may be produced.

5. BONE: Vata in the bone (asthi gata Vata) causes weakening and wasting of the bone tissue.

This includes brittle bones, easy or spontaneous fractures, osteoporosis and pain in the bones. There will also be pain or sensitivity of the teeth, cavities in the teeth, brittle nails and hair, and falling of teeth and hair.

Diseases include arthritis, osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, osteoporosis and bone tumors.

6. MARROW: Vata invading the marrow (majja gata Vata) will also dry it and deplete it.

There will be weakness of the nerves, nerve pain, tremors, convulsions, coma or paralysis. There will be pain or cracking in the joints, dizziness, blurred vision, ringing in the ears, along with nervousness, insomnia, feelings of emptiness, fear and anxiety.

Diseases include neurasthenia, neuralgia, sciatica, epilepsy, multiple sclerosis or tumors in the nerve tissue.

7. REPRODUCTIVE FLUID: Vata in the reproductive fluid (shukra gata Vata) will similarly cause it to waste away.

There will be sexual debility, impotence, infertility or sterility. Sexual intercourse may be difficult or painful with lack of secretions. In women the hormonal cycle will be deranged with

difficult periods and scanty flow or ceasing of menstruation altogether. For men, the sperm count will be low and amount of sperm deficient. Psychologically, there will be nervousness, fear, anxiety and lack of love or feeling loved, sometimes suicidal feelings.

Other diseases include swollen prostate, swelling of the testes, prostate, breast or uterine cysts or tumors usually of a hard and dry nature. The immune system may collapse, along with general collapse of vitality.

PITTA

Pitta from its site of accumulation in the small intestine or from the liver and gall bladder also enters into the blood stream and invades the tissues.

1. PLASMA: Pitta entering into the plasma (rasa gata Pitta) damages the skin. It causes burning sensation on the skin and red, blue or yellow skin discoloration.

It produces a variety of inflammatory skin diseases and rashes including acne, dermatitis, urticaria, psoriasis, eczema and other skin diseases wherein the skin is red, hot or oily (ie. damp-heat skin diseases in Chinese medicine). It causes high fever often with thirst and sweating and such conditions as influenza, bronchitis, measles, chicken pox and herpes and swollen gland conditions like mumps and swollen inflamed lymphatics generally.

2. BLOOD: Pitta entering into the blood (rakta gata Pitta) also heats it up and causes it to move faster.

It produces burning sensations, heat sensations in the hands and feet, flushing up and hot flashes. It causes the blood to clot slowly with slow healing of sores and wound. It promotes all kinds of bleeding including epistaxis, hemetemesis, hemoptysis, even hemophilia.

Such liver-spleen diseases as jaundice and hepatitis can occur. Inflammatory skin diseases, as under plasma, can occur with more redness, bleeding or pus formation. Boils, carbuncles, abscesses can occur and other toxic blood conditions can occur almost anywhere in the body, along with high fever.

3. MUSCLE: Pitta entering into the muscle (mamsa gata Pitta) produces muscle inflammation and abscesses in the muscle tissue.

This includes bursitis and tendinitis in the voluntary muscles. In the smooth muscles (as of the gastrointestinal tract) it causes such conditions as ulcers, gastritis (inflammation of the stomach), enteritis (inflammation of the intestines), colitis (inflammation of the colon) and appendicitis, also gingivitis (inflammation of the gums). In the cardiac muscles it causes myocarditis and coronary heart disease. There will be fever, swelling and pain.

4. FAT: Pitta in the fat or adipose tissue (medo gata Pitta) will also cause burning or infection in the fat tissue.

This causes the formation of abscesses and tumors in the fat tissue and in the sebaceous glands. There will be profuse sweating, thirst, excess urination and dehydration. Kidney infections (more acute or severe with blood in the urine) can occur along with diabetes (Pitta type) and other wasting diseases.

5. BONE: Pitta entering the bone (asthi gata Pitta) will cause infection or inflammation of bone tissue.

Such conditions as arthritis (Pitta type or damp-heat type with much redness and pain), periostitis or osteomyelitis can occur, along with burning pain in the bones and joints. There may be abscesses deep in the bones. Greying or balding of the hair are possible along with deep infections in the nails.

6. MARROW: Pitta in the marrow (majja gata Pitta) causes various inflammatory diseases of the nerve and bone marrow.

These include neuritis, encephalitis, meningitis and sciatica. The bone marrow may be burnt up or depleted causing anemia. The nerve tissue may be burnt up causing neurasthenia. There will be heat in the head and eyes, dizziness, headache, anger and irritability. Perception may be overly sharp or painful.

7. REPRODUCTIVE FLUID: Pitta in the reproductive fluid (shukra gata Pitta) causes inflammation and burning up of the reproductive fluid.

Uterine bleeding, infections, tumors or cancer may occur in women, with hot, excess or painful menstruation, with overly frequent periods or bleeding between them. In men swollen and testes prostate can occur with infection, fever and blood in the sperm. The immune system can collapse with no resistance to infectious diseases.

KAPHA

Kapha moves from its site of accumulation in the stomach and enters the bloodstream and the tissues.

1. PLASMA: Kapha in the plasma (rasa gata Kapha) causes various phlegmatic diseases of the skin and lungs.

The skin will be pale, white, cold, damp and thick. Various damp skin diseases can occur including fungus infections, warts, cysts and damp type eczema. Edema, facial or subcutaneous, is possible.

There will be congested lungs with fever, cough and swollen glands. Such conditions include influenza, bronchitis and asthma. Nausea, lack of appetite and feelings of heaviness of the body and heart will occur.

2. BLOOD: Kapha in the blood (rakta gata Kapha) causes phlegmatic diseases of the blood and heart.

There will be poor circulation, cold extremities, fullness in the veins and the blood will be pale, sticky, viscous and stagnant. There will be high cholesterol, arteriosclerosis and hypertension. Blood clots will form, along with narrowing of the coronary artery and heart attacks can occur.

There will be anemia, enlargement of the liver and spleen, jaundice, congestion of the bile and soft type gall stones.

3. MUSCLE: Kapha invading the muscles (mamsa gata Kapha) produces various congestive diseases of the muscle tissue.

There will be swelling of the muscles, difficulty in movement, heaviness, rigidity, lethargy and lack of muscle tone. Tumors or chronic ulcers may occur, including uterine tumors. The heart may be enlarged or cardiac edema may occur. The waste material for the muscles, like ear wax and snot will be profuse.

4. FAT: Kapha in the fat (medo gata Kapha) will produce an excess of fat tissue.

There will be obesity, edema and fatty tumors, with heaviness and fatigue. Various kidney disorders can occur including chronic infections, albuminuria and diabetes. Weak spleen-pancreas function can occur, perhaps diabetes. The sweat will be cold, sticky or slimy.

5. BONE: Kapha in the bone (asthi gata Kapha) produces excess and congestion of the bone tissue.

There will be heaviness in the bones, swollen joints and arthritis (damp, watery or Kapha type), with chronic low grade bone infections. Extra bones, bone spurs or extra teeth may occur or bone tumors or bone cancer (osteoma, sarcoma). There will be thickening and shortening of the nails and hair and excess hair on the body.

6. MARROW: Kapha in the marrow (majja gata Kapha) results in congestive disorders of the marrow and nerve tissue.

There will be swelling or loosening of the joints, with dull, aching pain. They will be lack of nerve sensitivity, dullness of the senses, numbness and lethargy, along with low grade nerve infections. Tumors in the nerve tissue (neuroma) are possible or hydrocephalus (excess water in the brain) and many nervous system disorders like multiple sclerosis, along with the blocking of the nerve channels.

7. REPRODUCTIVE FLUID: Kapha in the reproductive fluid (shukra gata Kapha) causes congestive disorders in the reproductive system.

There will be sexual debility, infertility and impotence. In

women there will be uterine tumors, cysts or polyps, possibly ectopic pregnancy or endometriosis, with thick leucorrhea or a cold damp uterus. For men there will be swollen prostate and testes (hydrocele), along with spermatorrhea. The semen will be cold, thick and excessive. Cancer is possible but tumors will be usually benign.

The immune system may not collapse but there will be poor resistance to colds and flus, low energy, lack of motivation and degenerated metabolism.

We see that the same disease, like arthritis, a vitiation of the bone tissue, has three forms according to which humor is damaging the tissue. To differentiate these conditions we must also weigh all the symptoms in the body and the constitution to discover their humoral predominance.

Hence we must learn to differentiate

1. The nature of the disease
2. Its stage of development
3. Its location

The first is according to the underlying humor or humors and their Sama or Nirama conditions. The second is according to the six stages and the third is according to the tissue entered.

In summary, to treat these conditions we must

1. Cleanse the humors out of the deeper tissues (central disease pathway)
2. Lead them back into the bloodstream (outer disease pathway)
3. And to the digestive tract (inner disease pathway) for their removal

The first step requires the use of herbs and diet often over a long period of time. The second step includes oleation and sweating therapies. The third involves primary cleansing methods like vomiting, purgation and enemas.

Again, to begin this process, we must first remove any Ama from the system. Any of these conditions of the humors in the tissues can be in Sama or Nirama conditions. To determine this we should examine the weight of Sama or Nirama conditions as the breath, tongue coating etc.

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PART II. LESSON 5

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What are the main signs of Vata in the tissues?
2. What are the main signs of Pitta?
3. What are the main signs of Kapha?

4. How do Vata, Pitta and Kapha differ as to how they damage a particular tissue, for example, marrow?
5. Why should Vata cause the most diseases?
6. Trace the movement of the humors through the tissues and the stages of disease.

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PART II. LESSON 7

DIAGNOSIS AND PATIENT EXAMINATION, PULSE, TONGUE AND ABDOMEN

Ayurvedic diagnosis comes in many forms and varieties. Often it may be no more than taking the patient's pulse, looking at their tongue and asking a few questions. On the other hand, complete physical and psychological examinations can be given, examining in detail all the humors, tissues, channels, organs and waste materials of the body.

Diagnosis may aim at either

1. Constitutional evaluation (Prakriti Pariksha)
2. The treatment of specific disorders (Vikriti Pariksha)

Usually the former should precede the latter, as it affords us a better background for understanding it. This also depends upon whether the client is coming in for a general health evaluation or has a particular problem that requires especial attention.

In the first case the condition of the body as a whole is examined. In the second case we target the symptoms and syndromes of the disease. Most important in this instance is learning the "chief complaint" of the patient, as that is usually what treatment will center on. Even if in our minds we are treating the patient for some constitutional derangement they will be looking at improving their chief problem.

THREE METHODS OF DIAGNOSIS

Three basic diagnostic approaches are recognized in Ayurveda;

1. Observation (darshana)
2. Touch (sparshana)
3. Questioning (prashnana)

Most diagnostic procedures can be found within these three.

OBSERVATION

Observation includes looking at the patient as a whole and also examining various special parts of the body. These include the tongue, eyes or nails, wherein imbalances are more likely to be visible.

Much of the art of diagnosis is the same as the art of observation. We must learn to observe people, how they move, talk, what their posture is, how they express themselves--what factors reveal imbalances, excesses or disharmonies.

TOUCH

Touch includes taking of the pulse, the palpation of the abdomen and other important points on the body.

It may involve the use of equipment, like a stethoscope to examine the state of the lungs, heart, etc., though this is allopathic, not traditionally Ayurvedic.

QUESTIONING

Questioning involves taking of medical history and finding the vital responses of the patient. This includes the patterns of appetite, digestion, elimination, urination, sweat, menstruation, sexual function, general energy level, susceptibility to disease (immune system function) and so on. It involves noting disorders of pain, weakness or dysfunction involved, as well as the regularity or irregularity of function.

Questioning is probably the most important factor, as more can be revealed through it. However, we cannot entirely trust patients to know what their condition is or to report as to how their body is functioning.

Questioning thus requires some diplomacy on the part of the practitioner and some openness on the part of the patient. It is better to ask a client for what a condition is, like their pattern of urination, than to ask them whether it is normal or not. The later implies some value judgement on their part. Normal can mean almost anything and we often learn to accept as alright long term or chronic imbalances.

A general Ayurvedic examination centers on the examination of physical and mental constitution, for which the lists and information given in this previous sections can be used.

Complete Ayurvedic examination includes the humors, tissues, waste materials, systems and organs of the body, as well as the state of the mind and the life-force. Each organ, tissue or system can be profiled according to its functioning as strong or weak, balanced or imbalanced and relative to which of the humors may be most affecting it. Much of the information already given on these topics is useful for diagnosis as it shows how to determine normal and abnormal states of these factors.

Ayurveda does not rely on medical testing. This is part of allopathic medicine. But many Ayurvedic doctors from India, as they are also trained in allopathy, use such methods. We will not discuss such tests here as they can be learned elsewhere if it is desired. Ayurveda is concerned more with the state of the vital force than with specific biochemical problems. It does use such methods as urine analysis, however, but in an energetic, not chemical model.

STEPS IN PATIENT EXAMINATION

CONSTITUTIONAL EXAMINATION (Prakriti Pariksha)

It is always important to first determine individual constitution. This can be done with the help of our Constitutional Examination section.

1. Examine the frame of the patient and the general condition of the structure and limbs of the body, along with complexion. This does not require asking questions of the patient.

2. Determine the condition of the metabolic factors. These include appetite (state of digestive fire), circulation and the condition of the waste materials. This requires questioning and ascertainment of long term patterns.

   It is often good to inquire as to the diet of the patient at this time, as this not only reveals long term metabolic tendencies but also may show patterns of potential imbalance.

3. Examine the general strength and activity of the client, including external aggravating factors like heat or cold and resistance to disease. At this stage it is also good to examine, the pulse, tongue, abdomen, etc.

4. Examine the mental and emotional nature with respect to speech, memory, sleep, dreams etc. In this regard also examine the state of Prana, Tejas and Ojas.

5. Determine the mental and spiritual nature according to the three gunas and their qualities.

A more extensive examination can involve examining each of the humors, tissues, waste materials, channel-systems, vital organs, sense organs, organs of action and mental faculties (emotion, ego and reason) and indicate their nature and level of function, along with suggestions to improve them.

It should be noted, however, that most people do not want to

spend the time (well over an hour) or the money for complete examinations. Nor does the physician always want or need to. Once we have ascertained the basic constitution from several major factors we may not need to study all the rest. We need to know enough about our patient to begin treatment. We may not be able to get to all the deeper layers of their condition at once. Often the pulse or general appearance of the patient is enough to get started. Some Ayurvedic doctors can recommend treatment just from a picture of the patient.

It is like the old metaphor of the grain of rice. If we examine a pot of rice cooking on the stove and find that one grain is cooked, we know that the whole pot is done. We don't have to examine all of them. Hence more experienced practitioners may need less time in examination or diagnosis.

Moreover, we may want to specialize in certain forms of diagnosis, like pulse or physiognomy. We do not have to be proficient in all means of diagnosis but enough so that they can check and balance each other. Yet whenever we treat someone it should be based upon a clear diagnosis that takes into consideration their total condition (though we may only elect to treat one thing at a time). We should not treat based upon impulse, intuition or muscle testing but should use these things to supplement, not substitute for a rational diagnosis.

Constitutional examination should provide us with a good idea as to the balance of the three humors and the three gunas in the individual. We may judge the nature (Prakriti) of the patient to be Vata 2, Pitta 4 and Kapha 1, and to be Sattva 2, Rajas 3 and Tamas 1 for the mind. The state of Prana, Tejas and Ojas can also be determined, as Prana 2, Tejas 4, Ojas 2.

EXAMINATION OF DISEASE (Vikriti Pariksha)

This involves study of most of the same factors but with reference to the disease condition of the patient, not their underlying constitution.

Hence questioning focuses on the nature and onset of the disease, its symptoms, sensitivities and development; the conditions unique to this disease complex as apart from what is usual or normal for the individual. For example, see how the appetite, thirst, elimination, urination, temperature sensitivity, energy level etc. have been changed by the disease factor.

1. Determine the time of onset of the disease, whether it is chronic or acute, and any past history of similar complaints both by the patient and his family.

2. Ascertain the underlying humoral imbalance behind the condition and whether it is reinforced by the predominant humor of the individual or not. Also determine the main factor in the disease, for example, pain, fever, infection, fatigue.

3. Determine whether the condition is Sama or Nirama; whether there are toxins to be removed from the digestive tract first and to what degree.

4. Determine which of the six stages of disease is involved, along with the disease pathway and what tissues, waste materials, systems or organs are involved.

5. Note any mental or psychological factors involved, as stress from the disease or stress causing it. In this regard see if it is more a mental than physical disease.

6. See what environmental or life-style factors like work, diet or exercise may promote or sustain the disease.

7. Determine the strength and motivation of the patient versus that of the disease factor. This is the basis of prognosis.

We can then give numbers to the disease condition (Vikriti) in terms of humors, gunas or Prana, Tejas and Ojas. These we should list with those of the constitution to see what deviation from the constitution has come through the disease.

Usually it is best to give both a Western idea of the disease as well as a more specific Ayurvedic description. Also the degree of the disease should be indicated. For example, a patient may have severe rheumatoid arthritis, but Ayurvedically it would be a severe case of Sama Pitta in the bone tissue. The Western name of the disease can be an aid in patient communication but we should avoid throwing names and labels at people. We should always assure our patient that the disease is a humoral imbalance that can be treated in a holistic way.

We should always remember that examination is the basis for a strategy of treatment. Diagnosis is an art; though there are guidelines to it there is no absolute right way of doing it and often several possibilities exist. A patient may have several problems or imbalances, so we may have to choose to focus on one and let the results of our treatment dictate further modifications. Our initial diagnosis is a guideline for further treatment, not the end of our examination of the patient.

Our skill in diagnosis should go hand in hand with skill in the modalities of treatment. The best diagnosis in the world is not of much value if we cannot tell our patients how to effectively treat their condition.

If you are unable to arrive at a complete diagnosis, if you can at least determine the humoral imbalance, a line of treatment is still possible. Again we should move from the general to the specific.

CONDITIONS TO BEWARE OF TREATING

In the beginning we should start off with general constitution balancing for health maintenance and disease prevention. Then we can begin to treat more simple acute conditions like colds, flus, insomnia, headaches--common diseases. Then we can treat non-acute stage chronic diseases like arthritis.

In the beginning we should avoid any acute infections or high febrile diseases. This is simply because such conditions put us at risk. We should also be careful with patients with weak hearts or a history of strokes.

We should avoid very difficult or life-threatening diseases like cancer or Aids unless we have a very good understanding with the patient. Even when our clients may have much openness to us, we must remember that their friends and families may not. When severe illnesses occur, many emotional changes also arise, and people are apt to blame their doctors and healers.

Hence some caution and discretion is to be recommended. Often it is good to say that we are not treating a particular condition, say for example cancer, but that we are giving a regime for balancing the humors which may be beneficial for it. Such an educational rather than a treatment role is often safer and should be started first.

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METHODS OF DIAGNOSIS

PULSE DIAGNOSIS

Pulse examination (nadi pariksha) is one of the most important factors for determining both the constitution of the individual and the nature of the particular disease they may have. Below we have indicated how to judge the pulse relative to both constitutional factors, the predominant biological humor (Prakriti), and disease factors (Vikriti). The two conditions are not the same and care must be taken not to confuse them.

To determine the constitution the pulse should be taken when there is no acute disease condition, or the pulse may have to be adjusted for the influence of the disease. Taking of medications and drugs can alter the pulse also.

Taking of the pulse has become the sign of a doctor or healer. It also serves to establish a rapport with the patient, to come into contact with their energy system and to give them confidence

in the person treating them. Through the pulse we can note the state of their primary vitality (prana) and connect our healing force with it. Without taking the pulse diagnosis always seems incomplete or unprofessional. So taking of the pulse should not be overlooked or done too quickly.

We should try to determine how the pulse relates to the other factors perhaps more obvious in the patient. We should judge the entire condition of the client. If we find a Kapha (slow, broad, pulse) in an obviously Vata person (thin, dry, nervous), we should expect some condition of stagnation, Ama or superficial Kapha, we should not pronounce them to be a Kapha person.

There is of course much in pulse diagnosis that only practice and experience can reveal. One should not expect to learn it quickly. However, there are some more obvious pulse differences that are not that hard to determine, like the rate of the pulse, which can give us important information in our diagnosis and treatment, even if it does not show us everything. Hence though it may take much time and more study and practice to become a pulse master, even a beginner can begin to use the pulse as a helpful diagnostic tool. Even when one is not certain of the nature or meaning of the pulse one should still take it and try to see how it corresponds to the condition and constitution of the individual.

While many of us have the idea of the great oriental doctor as a pulse master who can tell us our constitution, diseases and perhaps also psychological and spiritual nature from the pulse, we should realize that such practitioners are quite rare.

In modern India, the Ayurvedic schools seldom teach the pulse at all, except according to the Western medical (allopathic) approach. They rely more upon examination of the bodily systems (srotas) for their determination of constitution and disease nature, which is often quite effective in itself. Many Ayurvedic doctors have special pulse knowledge but it is often preserved in a veil of secrecy, just as the Chinese and other traditional cultures have tried to guard that knowledge. Hence we should not expect that we have to become pulse masters before we can implement Ayurveda in a practical or helpful manner. Even in modern Chinese medicine the pulse is often thrown out or discounted if it does not agree with the majority of the symptoms.

Ayurveda is a scientific system. Diagnosis should comprehend all the symptoms of a patient. It should not be limited to pulse. There are also doctors, including some Ayurvedic ones, who create a mystique of the pulse and otherwise do little examination or counseling of patients. Ayurveda makes objective sense and it does not need to be clothed in an unexplained pulse taking talent. Such doctors may be hiding their lack of true knowledge as so-called "pulse masters" and taking advantage of the gullibility of their patients. Ayurveda should produce a well-rounded diagnostician not a series of mystical pulse-masters, who will often not agree with each other.

HOW TO TAKE THE PULSE

The pulse should be also taken so as not to be affected by normal physiological activities. Hence it is best felt when one has an empty stomach, between meals, in a state of rest and when not under mental or emotional agitation. After meals or when hungry the influence of the digestive fire affects the nature of the pulse. After exercise the pulse rate also changes with the increased circulation.

Three fingers are used for pulse diagnosis. The index finger is placed at the base of the wrist and the other two fingers are placed next to it. Some practitioners take the pulse with the index finger about the first crease of the wrist, others a finger below that, below the prominence of the wrist bone. The wrist should be slightly flexed. Pressure is then gradually applied noting the strength and nature of the pulse in the process.

Different degrees of pressure may be held for a few seconds. Usually soft, mild and strong pressure or three degrees of pressure are used. If the pulse is perceptible and has some strength on all three levels, it is a sign of general good health and adequate energy.

FACTORS IN PULSE DIAGNOSIS

There are a number of factors for determining the nature and quality of the pulse of which the most important are mentioned below. We must learn to synthesize them all for the right judgement.

While we have arranged these according to the three humors, it should be noted that for dual types a combination of factors denoting two types of pulses will usually occur. It is the predominance of factors that matters and no one in itself may be enough to make a decision. Some, as noted, will have more weight than others.

1. Quality of Pulse
2. Site of the Pulse
3. Rate of Pulse
4. Depth of Pulse
5. Strength of Pulse
6. Regularity or Rhythm of Pulse

1. QUALITY OF THE PULSE

This is the main factor used for judging constitution. It refers to the general nature or movement (gati) of the pulse. It may be hard to grasp at first as it may be influenced by the strength or weakness of the individual. Hence it is easiest to determine it in relatively healthy types first.

CONSTITUTIONALLY

Vata types have a pulse that resembles of movement of a serpent. Hence Vata pulse is said to have "Sarpagati", snake like movement. Their pulse is often narrow and thready, somewhat slithering or irregular in a horizontal movement like a snake. Both the volume and tension of the pulse are low. It is may hard to find or difficult to palpate owing to its tenuous and fluctuating manner. It is often changeable and subtle like the wind.

Pitta pulse is more bounding in nature. It is said to have "Mandukagati", or resemble the movement of a frog. It is often wiry, taught and jumping in nature. It possesses a high amplitude and drops suddenly. It appears excited or dancing in motion. It often resembles the flaring up of a fire.

Kapha pulse is more even and wavy in nature. It is said to possess "Hamsagati" or have the movement of a swan. It is often wide, broad, rolling and graceful and resembles the movement of river. Usually volume and rhythm are balanced.

IN THE DISEASE PROCESS

Accumulation of phlegm tends to make the pulse more slippery or rolling and often gives it more Kapha like characteristics. Eating of too much dairy or mucus forming foods can give it this affect. Such a pulse is often found in Ama conditions wherein the undigested food mass causes the energy to stagnate and to breed congestion. Weak spleen or pancreas and poor sugar metabolism can also make the pulse appear more Kapha than it is.

Liver disorders, like hepatitis, often make the pulse more wiry or frog like in motion. Pain can also make the pulse tight and somewhat more wiry. Fever may make the pulse larger or broader, as well as faster. Kidney disorders and any severe weakness or general debility tends to make the pulse more thready or snake like or weak and hard to find.

2. SITE OF THE PULSE

The position of the index finger, the first position in the pulse indicates Vata. The position of the middle finger, the second position indicates Pitta. The position of the ring finger, the third position indicates Kapha. Sometimes the little finger was used as a fourth position indicating the blood, but this is not commonly used in Ayurvedic practice.

These pulses also correspond to the three layers of the body. The first pulse measures the energy in the chest, the upper part of the body, called the "upper warmer" in Chinese medicine. The second pulse measures the energy in the middle between the navel and the breast, called the "middle warmer" in Chinese medicine. The third

pulse measures the energy below the navel or in the lower body, the "lower warmer". As Vata tends to move upwards, Kapha downwards and Pitta stay in the middle, the energy in these different parts of the body can reflect that of the three biological humors.

CONSTITUTIONALLY

Many Vata people do have a more pronounced pulse in the first position as measured by the index figure. Many Pitta people similarly have a stronger pulse in the second position.

Generally, however, the site of the pulse should not be given too much emphasis. The quality of the pulse is the overriding factor. Very few people, including most Kapha types, will have a stronger pulse in the third position. As the radial artery rises up along the bone to the wrist, it is only natural for everyone that the pulse is a little stronger in the first position and weaker in the third.

IN THE DISEASE PROCESS

In diseases the pulse tends to be more evident at the sites wherein acute symptoms prevail. Acute lung disorders tend to show as a stronger first position pulse, acute digestive disorders in the second position and acute kidney problems in the third.

Moreover, chronic diseases, those that involve a devitalization of the organs and tissues of the body, will tend to weaken the pulse of the site in which they are located. Hence chronic kidney diseases, low Ojas or sexual debility disorders will be reflected in a weaker third position pulse.

3. RATE OF PULSE

This is also an important factor and one of the easiest to observe, as well as one of the most reliable.

CONSTITUTIONALLY

Vata pulse tends to be fastest, Pitta moderate and Kapha slow. Vata runs 80-100 beats per minute or 5 beats per breath. Pitta pulse runs 65-80 beats per minute or 4 beats per breath. Kapha pulse runs less than 65 beats per minute or 3 beats per breath.

IN DISEASE CONDITIONS

Whenever there is fever the pulse rate becomes more rapid; the higher the fever the faster the pulse. The pulse can only be judged constitutionally when no overriding disease factor like fever is present.

Other factors like exercise or eating of spicy foods can increase the pulse rate, anything that tends to increase or stimulate circulation.

Cold tends to make the pulse slower, as does any stagnation or Ama in the system.

4. DEPTH OF PULSE

This factor relates to the level at which we can find the pulse, or how much pressure is required to make the pulse perceptible.

CONSTITUTIONALLY

Vata pulse is perceptible at a superficial or surface level; Pitta at a moderate level; Kapha at a deep level. This is because Vata people with their thin skin and prominent veins allow the pulse to be more easily felt. Kapha people with their thick skin or fat around the wrist make the pulse harder to find and more pressure needs to be given to reach the level of the pulse. For this reason, particularly in weak and obese Kapha types, it is often hard to find the pulse at all. Pitta people fall in the middle.

IN DISEASE CONDITIONS

However, whenever there is a surface disease condition like the common cold or influenza, the body's energy is drawn to the surface to fight the pathogen. Hence the pulse tends to become superficial in many initial states of disease or lung disorders. On the other hand, in many deep seated, chronic or degenerative diseases with the energy of the body weak or drawn into the interior the pulse may be found only at a deep level.

Ama conditions also tend to make the pulse deep and heavy, as do congestive or stagnation conditions generally.

5. STRENGTH OF THE PULSE

This refers to the power the pulse has at the level we find it. It is also easy to determine once we have found the pulse.

CONSTITUTIONALLY

Vata types, with their poor circulation, often chronic low energy and tendency to deficiency, usually have the weakest pulse. Pitta types, with the bounding nature to the pulse and more aggressive nature usually have the strongest pulse. Kapha types, with their more even flowing pulse, fall in between. Their pulse has more consistent strength than Pitta but is often harder to find and more diffused by its broader volume.

IN DISEASE CONDITIONS

Any long term, chronic or debilitating disease, or any condition of old age or convalescence tends to show as a weaker pulse. Weak or debilitated Kapha types with overweight often have a very week, deep and slow pulse. More acute diseases, the influence of high fever or severe pain, tends to make the pulse stronger. Men generally have a stronger pulse than women.

Hence strength of the pulse often tells us more about the health or strength or weakness of the patient, then their constitution.

6. REGULARITY OF THE PULSE

This refers the constancy of the rhythm of the pulse. Irregularity of the pulse is evidenced by change of rhythm, most specifically by skipping a beat. The rate of the pulse may also slow down or speed up in an irregular manner, usually with the skipping of a beat. Normal pulse in all three humoral types should be regular.

CONSTITUTIONALLY

Vata pulse tends to be more irregular than the others owing to the shifting nature of Vata. Kapha pulse is the most regular owing to its constant nature. Pitta pulse falls in between.

Vata pulse may be irregular/ irregular. It may not only skip a beat but do so in an erratic manner. Pitta pulse is more commonly regular/irregular. It will skip a beat but usually in the same rhythm.

IN THE DISEASE PROCESS

Emotional or nervous factors can cause transient irregularity of the pulse. These include stress, anxiety, worry and insomnia. Overuse of drugs or stimulants like coffee can have this effect temporarily also. Such transient conditions do not indicate any necessary heart weakness but do show a straining of the heart and nerves that will produce deeper problems if not checked.

Irregularity of pulse usually indicates heart disease more than a constitutional nature and is often associated with angina, hypertension, arteriosclerosis or heart weakness. Hence it is a good idea for the patient to receive an E.K.G. or heart test from a doctor or hospital.

PULSE AND ORGAN CORRESPONDENCE

The pulse corresponds to the different organs of the body, just as the three sites relate to the three levels of the body. This is an idea more common to Chinese medicine than Ayurveda, but it is still found in Ayurveda and used by some Ayurvedic doctors.

At a superficial level the pulse reveals the action of the "bowels" or hollow organs. At a deeper level it reveals the corresponding internal or solid organ. Hence the organs come in pairs according to the exchange of energy between them along their channels.

LEFT HAND------

	SUPERFICIAL	DEEP
First Position	Small Intestine	Heart
Second Position	Gall Bladder	Liver
Third Position	Urinary Bladder	Kidney

RIGHT HAND-----

	SUPERFICIAL	DEEP
First Position	Large Intestine	Lungs
Second Position	Stomach	Spleen
Third Position	Pericardium	Triple Warmer

Sometimes a simpler system is employed wherein each site corresponds to one organ and the hollow organs are not used.

RIGHT HAND: first position, Lungs; second position, Spleen; third position, Kidneys
LEFT HAND: first position, Heart; second position, Liver; third position, Kidneys.

Even in Chinese medicine this simpler version is more common today and has been through time. Moreover, in Chinese medicine, as in Ayurveda, the general quality of the pulse is given more emphasis than its particular strength at any of these specific sites. That is usually considered enough for the proper treatment of disease. Chinese medicine is two thirds herbal medicine and for its herbal formulas only the general character of the pulse is indicated. The specific organ pulses are more employed in acupuncture systems that aim at pulse balancing and do not always have a consistent system for understanding the development and stages of diseases.

Hence we first recommend learning the general characteristics of the pulse before trying to discriminate differences in the pulse at these different sites. If the general character is not understood, then the specific site pulses will not be understood either. We often cannot find complete agreement among practitioners as to the general nature of the pulse, so these fine points within it become often a more subjective art.

SYNTHESIS

For determining the constitution through the pulse the most important factor is the general quality of the pulse. Second, the rate of the pulse is helpful. The strength of the pulse may be

misleading as this measures general energy quantity, not quality. The site where the pulse is strongest is also a secondary factor, which some Ayurvedic teachings tend to overemphasize.

The depth of the pulse can be of some help, along with noting the nature of the skin, as thick (Kapha), thin (Vata) or in between (Pitta). Other skin indicators are warm (Pitta), cold and dry (Vata), cold and damp (Kapha). Skin complexion as ruddy (Pitta), dusky (Vata) and white (Kapha) can be noted.

STUDY EXERCISE

Examine your own pulse under different conditions. Take it in the morning right after getting up, during the day both before and after meals and before sleep. Feel it after such diverse actions as meditation, exercise, walking, running, eating of different kinds of food, fasting. Note how different nervous stimulation affect the pulse like watching television, listening to music. Note how emotions affect it like anger, fear and desire. Try to note any monthly, yearly or seasonal changes.

ESTABLISHING A PULSE DIARY

Begin taking the pulses of as many people as you can. Judge these according to qualities and try to correlate them to the constitution of the individual as revealed by all diagnostic tools. Judge also the pulse in disease versus normal conditions and see what differences in it you notice when the disease factor is in effect. Try to judge the pulse of others in different conditions as per the instructions for your own. Note that it is not only important to feel as many different pulses as possible but also to feel the same pulse under as many different conditions as possible.

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TONGUE DIAGNOSIS

The tongue is another important site from which we can read the condition of the body as a whole and that of the digestive system in particular. It is important for ascertaining the humors and their Sama and Nirama states.

The primary factors to consider are

1. The body or size, shape and movement of the tongue
2. The color of the tongue
3. The tongue coating
4. The amount of moisture on the tongue

1. TONGUE BODY

Vata types usually have a thin, small or long tongue. The tongue often trembles.

Pitta types have medium tongues but may be sharply pointed.

Kapha types usually have large, round, thick or fatty tongues often with big lips.

Weak spleen/pancreas function and excess eating of sugar often shows up as a thick or swollen tongue. Scallops, tooth prints or indentations around the margin of the tongue indicate chronic low Agni, weak digestive power. They are more common with large or flabby tongues.

2. TONGUE COLOR

Normal tongue color is pink. Red tongue indicates heat or fever. Pale tongue, lips and complexion indicates anemia. Blue or purple tongue indicates stagnation of blood and often shows liver disorders, particularly when there are purple spots on the tongue.

Vata usually shows a tongue that is somewhat pale or dull in color.

Pitta usually is indicated by a red tongue but blue or purple usually belong to it and other more pronounced colors like yellow or green.

Kapha shows up as a pale or white tongue.

Redness at the tip of the tongue shows heat in the heart, stress, and anxiety. Redness along the margins shows an early stage or superficial heat or febrile condition. Redness of the whole tongue shows a more severe or long standing heat condition.

3. TONGUE COATING

Normal and healthy tongue does not have a significant coating. There may be a slight white coating.

Tongue coating indicates Ama, the by products of indigestion. It shows that the humors may be accumulating. Thick white tongue coating shows accumulation of Ama. Thick or greasy yellow tongue coating shows Ama jvara, fever or inflammation due to the fermentation of the Ama. Absence of tongue coating shows a Nirama condition.

Vata usually shows a brown or black tongue coating, more pronounced at the back.

Pitta usually shows a yellow tongue coating.

Kapha shows a white tongue coating often with a layer of mucus on it.

Black tongue coating may occur after a febrile disease owing to burning out of body fluids.

4. TONGUE MOISTURE

Moist tongue generally shows the accumulation of fluids, phlegm or Ama in the system. Dry tongue shows dehydration or fever.

Vata usually shows a dry tongue that is often cracked or a dry tongue coating.

Pitta usually shows a moist tongue in Sama conditions but a red and dry tongue in Nirama conditions.

Kapha exhibits a moist or wet tongue with possible mucus and excess salivation. Froth or foamy saliva or bubbles on the tongue shows Kapha and weakness of the lungs.

OTHER FACTORS

Cracks in the tongue indicate high Vata or Nirama Pitta (when red). A central crack shows pain in the spine. Deviations in the crack show sites of problems. Towards the front of the tongue upper back or neck problems are indicated. Towards the back of the tongue lower back problems are shown.

Sores in the mouth and tongue, like cold sores or fever blisters, indicate Pitta or poor liver function. They also tend to follow a febrile disease and may indicate a need for purgation. They can show ulcers in the digestive tract also and may come from hyperacidity.

Raised papilla or small mounds at the back of the tongue often show hemorrhoids or prolapse of the organs (stomach, uterus).

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ABDOMEN

Palpation of the abdomen is an important diagnostic tool. As it has much more variable factors than the pulse or tongue, we can only outline it briefly here. It is not always necessary but it can be quite important, particularly where there is abdominal pain or distention.

The patient should be placed upon a treatment table in a warm room. The Ayurvedic practitioner should make sure that their hands are clean, warm and dry. The shirt and belt of the patient should be opened to reveal the abdomen.

TEMPERATURE

Note the general temperature of the abdomen, in lower, middle and higher areas by placing your hand on each consecutively for a few seconds.

Warm or ruddy abdomen shows Pitta. Cool, moist and thick abdomen shows Kapha. Cold, dry and thin abdomen shows Vata. Hot and sweaty abdomen shows fever.

Kapha types also usually have a broad epigastric angle or wide chest, whereas it is narrow in Vata types, moderate in Pitta types.

ABDOMINAL PAIN

If much pain is evidenced on palpation an Ama condition often exists. Sama Vata has more pain in distention in the lower abdomen, Sama Pitta has more pain and burning sensation in the middle abdomen. Sama Kapha has more pain or congestion in the upper abdomen and chest.

Pain can indicate other factors, however. Lower abdominal pain can indicate blood stagnation in women with absence of menstruation, difficult menstruation or more severe conditions like uterine tumors, endometritis or endometriosis. On the lower right abdomen it can indicate appendicitis or inflammation of the large intestine.

Generally Kapha people will be most open to touch and can stand a good deal of pressure. Vata people will be sensitive initially and will not like to be touched by cold hands but will find a warm gentle touch to be soothing in the long run. Pitta types will not like to be touched so much.

Lower abdominal distention, tenderness or pain on palpation indicates high Vata and Vata accumulating in the large intestine. A hollow sound may be felt indicating the accumulation of gas. Sounds may be heard in the intestines or peristalsis may be felt.

Pain along the margin of the ribs, hypochondriac pain and particularly in the area of the liver shows liver disorders and often suppressed emotions. Often there is accumulation and congestion of the bile, a Pitta or Kapha condition.

Subcardiac (beneath the sternum) pain and tension shows weak digestion. It is often accompanied by a gurgling or water sound in that area (succussion). This indicates trouble with the water metabolism, excess sugar consumption or poor spleen-pancreas function. It often indicates Ama or malabsorption. Along with burning sensation it shows Sama Pitta or hyperacidity.

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MARMA POINTS

Ayurveda, like Chinese medicine, recognizes a series of important points on the body, somewhat like the acupuncture points. These are called "marma" points. "Marma" refers to the vital points of the body that can be easily hurt or cause death, like the throat or the center of the chest. They are of five types: 1. sensitive muscle points, 2. sensitive blood vessel points, 3. sensitive tendon points, 4. sensitive bone points and 5. sensitive joint points.

Marma points are important for the diagnosis and treatment of disease and are useful for massage and body work. It is a subject in itself for further study and requires hands on experience to learn properly. Examine the section in THE AYURVEDIC SCIENCE OF LIFE by Dr. Subash Ranade, for more information on this subject.

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PART II. LESSON 7

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What are the three methods of diagnosis in Ayurvedic medicine?
2. How do the humors relate to the quality of the pulse?
3. How do the humors relate to the site of the pulse?
4. How do the humors relate to the rate of the pulse?
5. How do disease factors affect the qualities of the pulse?

6. What do the different colors of the tongue reveal?
7. How does the tongue reveal Sama and Nirama conditions?
8. In which areas of the abdomen does the pain of Sama Vata, Sama Pitta or Sama Kapha conditions tend to show up?
9. What are marma points?

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PART II. LESSON 8

YOGA AND AYURVEDIC PSYCHOLOGY 1.
SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLES OF AYURVEDA

For Ayurvedic treatment the analysis of the physical body and its functioning according to the humors and elements is the foundation for an examination of the deeper aspect of our nature, the mind. In it is root of our physical energies and the origin of disease.

Ayurveda in its true nature is as much psychology as medicine. Just as for treatment of the body we need to learn its structure and functions, so for treatment of the mind we need to know its structure and functions as well. In this system the mind is also an energetic formation that can be perceived and understood by the deeper consciousness. It has its particular elemental structure and its own process of digestion. It is also part of matter (Prakriti) and follows the same laws on a more subtle level. Hence the same language can be adapted to under;stand it.

To understand the Ayurvedic view of the mind, we first need to understand in more detail its view of the universe. This continues the material already presented on the background of Ayurveda in the Sankhya system of philosophy and cosmology at the beginning of the course.

THE THREE BODIES

In the Vedic system followed by Ayurveda, the human being is seen as composed of three bodies, what could be called "body, mind and soul". These function as vehicles for the inner Self or Purusha. Each is a kind of matter that encloses and serves as a vehicle for the underlying consciousness; hence they are all called bodies. They are not all bodies in the gross physical sense of the term. Ayurveda is concerned with an integral treatment of all these layers of our being starting with that which is most accessible, the physical body.

THE GROSS OR PHYSICAL BODY

The physical or gross body (sthula sharira) has sixteen components; the five sense organs, the five organs of action, the five elements and the mind (that part of it connected to the senses). Within it the biological forces of the three humors operate as the main energetic forces.

THE SUBTLE OR ASTRAL BODY

Within it is a subtle body of like form called the subtle or astral body (sukshma sharira). It is the "pure form" or energetic basic of the physical body. It is also composed of the five sense organs, the five organs of action and the five elements but on a subtle level. It includes not only mind but also ego and intelligence, which are do not exist directly on a physical level. Hence it has nineteen components total.

In it dwell the seven chakras or astral centers with the force of Kundalini at the base. Practises of Hatha, Kundalini and Bhakti Yoga (the Yoga of Devotion) serve to bring this body into function, as do many occult practises including the use of mind-altering drugs (though not usually in a wholesome manner). Such practises as mantra and pranayama are particularly strong to activate it.

There is a whole astral universe open for it to experience (the realm of pure form). In it life is experienced as pure energy and is free of the inertia of gross matter and objects take upon the form of the mind that perceives them.

THE CAUSAL BODY OR KARMIC SHEATH

Within the subtle body is a subtler or causal body (karana sharira) shaped like an egg around the other two bodies. It is composed of the five tanmatras, along with special causal forms of seeing and hearing (drishti/shruti). Through the tanmatras it can create the experience of either of the other two bodies. As it contains and projects the other two bodies, it is said to be composed of thirty-five parts; the nineteen of the astral and the sixteen of the physical.

It is the source of the other two bodies and imagines or envisions them though the process of incarnation. It stores the seeds or impressions of karma that motivate us from birth to birth and is the reincarnating entity or karmic sheath.

The causal body is centered in the heart, not the heart chakra of the astral or physical body, but the spiritual heart slightly to the right of the center of the chest. It is the ultimate abode of Ojas and contains the essence of Prana or the life-force behind all creation. Its powers are developed through the Yoga of Knowledge (Jnana Yoga) or pure, formless meditation.

It also has a whole causal universe open to it (the formless realm) and can experience all creation as the manifestation of its own ideals, including creating universes of its own.

Normally we are only aware of the physical body. We employ the astral body in dream, strong emotions and inspiration but are not usually conscious of it. The causal we only touch upon in deep sleep, profound perception or deep silence of mind.

THE FIVE SHEATHS

The Purusha or inner Self is encased in five sheaths or densities of matter (see the Taittiriya Upanishad for additional information). They are composed of subtle forms or precursors of the five elements.

1. The Food Sheath (Annamaya Kosha)/ Earth
2. The Breath Sheath (Pranamaya Kosha)/ Water
3. The Emotional Sheath (Manomaya Kosha)/ Fire
4. The Intelligence Sheath (Vijnanamaya Kosha)/ Air
5. The Bliss Sheath (Anandamaya Kosha)/ Ether

THE FIVE SHEATHS AND THE THREE BODIES

The Food Sheath makes up the physical body; the mental sheath the astral body; and the Bliss Sheath the causal body. The Breath Sheath mediates between the physical and astral bodies; the Intelligence Sheath mediates between the astral and causal bodies.

Or, in some systems, the breath sheath is considered dual in nature. Its lower aspect becomes the subtle physical or etheric sheath. Its higher aspect becomes the lower astral or vital sheath.

Similarly, the intelligence sheath may be considered as dual. Its lower function is intellect or thought directed towards the outer world of desire and the senses and part of the astral body. Its higher function is true intelligence or discrimination directed towards the eternal and part of the causal body.

METABOLISM OF THE FIVE SHEATHS

Each sheath has its own process of activity and its own form of metabolism relative to its constituent substance:

For the food sheath it is eating and excreting, or incoming and outgoing food, the metabolism of the earth element.

For the breath sheath it is inhalation and exhalation, or incoming and outgoing breath, the metabolism of water on a subtle level.

For the emotional sheath it is attraction and repulsion, or incoming and outgoing emotion. This relates to the metabolism of impressions and the inner metabolism of fire.

For the intelligence sheath it is incoming and outgoing knowledge. This relates to the metabolism of thought or that of air on an inner level.

For the bliss sheath it is incoming and outgoing bliss. This relates to the metabolism of the will and joy or that of ether on an inner level.

While Ayurveda is concerned mainly with the metabolic balance of the food and breath sheaths, these it harmonizes to allow for proper metabolism of the subtle sheaths as well.

It considers the failure to metabolize knowledge and wrong will in life as the basis of disease. These are dysfunctions of the intelligence and bliss sheaths. Any imbalance of the lower sheaths must come from such imbalances in the higher and cannot be entirely corrected without them also being corrected.

THE COMPOSITE SELF AND TRANSCENDENT SELF

Within these three bodies and five sheaths the inner Self functions, though in its own nature it transcends all these as pure freedom or pure awareness. Ayurveda is concerned with its functioning mainly within these bodies which it calls the "composite Self" (rashi Purusha), as it is determined by all the organic factors that compose it. The former is considered to be the "transcendent Self" (Paramatman).

THE SEVEN LEVELS OF THE COSMOS

The principles of the five sheaths make up the first five levels of the universe. Two more are added:

1. SUBSTANCE, Anna
2. ENERGY, Prana
3. EMOTION, Manas
4. INTELLIGENCE, Vijnana
5. BLISS, Ananda
6. CONSCIOUSNESS, Chit
7. BEING, Sat

These last two have no sheaths as they are beyond any manifestation. They are the fundamental reality and the background of the other principles, which can be viewed as a series of concentric circles with the physical in the middle as the most limited factor.

Ananda, Bliss, is also in part beyond manifestation. Together with the other higher two principles, it forms Sacchidananda, Being-Consciousness-Bliss, as the threefold transcendent reality of Brahman, Atman or the Purusha, the Absolute or the Self, in which is liberation.

In the Vedic system followed by Ayurveda, we gradually harmonize and bring to peace the lower principles in order to bring the higher into function. Hence the physical body is balanced in Ayurveda so that it can become a vehicle for the higher principles.

THE PLACE OF GOD

The Purusha or pure Spirit is the Divine or pure being. A creator or cosmic lord also exists (Ishwara) but his status varies in the different systems of Indian thought, some of which do not appear to recognize him at all. He is like the One God of monotheistic religions. He is usually defined as the reflected consciousness of the Purusha (Spirit) acting on Prakriti (Matter) as the ruler of the universe, the efficient cause of creation, like the potter who creates a pot.

He is the being working through Mahat, Cosmic Intelligence. As long as we are in the realm of Prakriti (Primal Matter) we are under his will and his laws and should do homage to him.

Attuning ourselves to his will lifts us to the summit of Prakriti from which we can more easily access the Purusha (Pure Spirit).

Hence faith in God and devotion to the Lord is also an important part of Ayurveda. Prayers, rituals like puja and offerings to him, are not only important for consecrating our healing practises, they are major healing practises in themselves and part of the spiritual therapy of Ayurveda. Healing the soul often involves some atonement or repentance to the Lord and in Ayurveda healing the body is only a means to aid in the healing of the soul.

Yet such a transcendent being to pray to can be seen in many forms. Even the Buddhists who generally do not recognize such a cosmic lord have exalted beings like the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas who can be prayed to as part of such spiritual healing and repentance for our wrong actions. So regardless of the philosophical status of such an entity it is a useful and universal psychological tool for inner growth.

In the Yoga system, God is the primal teacher, the original guru and also the original doctor or healer of all the universe. We can acknowledge him in whatever form we like, as he takes upon whatever form is dear to the individual, but our practice will not bring inner healing without his grace.

The Divine can be worshipped in the feminine form of the Divine Mother also. Her power also works through nature, as the great beauty and delight of creation. Often God is seen as the Divine Father and nature as the Divine Mother.

However, once we gain knowledge of our inner Self or Spirit we transcend not only nature but also God. We become one with him and one with the pure consciousness behind him. All laws apply only within Prakriti (Matter). Purusha (Spirit) is beyond all laws, not in violation of them but as their foundation.

VEDANTA/ SELF-KNOWLEDGE AS THE GOAL OF AYURVEDA

Vedanta, another important system of spiritual insight and experience in the Yoga tradition, develops these great perceptions of the Sankhya system to their culmination. In it Prakriti (Matter) becomes Maya (which literally means magic or illusion), the creative power of the Divine. The Purusha or Atman becomes Brahman, the Absolute or transcendent reality.

In the more radical systems of Vedanta, Brahman is considered to be the sole reality and the world an illusion, a play of thought like a dream. Most schools of Buddhism have a similar view. Less radical schools of Vedanta see the world as the active and the transcendent Brahman as the passive sides of the same reality and Maya as a creative power, which like the artistic skill of a great artist is a power of truth expression, though it is highly magical and marvelous.

Ayurveda accepts this Vedantic knowledge also and aims at arriving at the knowledge of Brahman as the ground of creation in the pure existent or pure being. Hence Ayurveda focuses on Self-knowledge, knowledge of our own being, that brings us to knowledge of Absolute reality, pure being itself. Ayurveda thus also derives from this foundation as a self-examination of body and mind. Health is considered the basis of this inner pursuit, not an end in itself. Not following this inner search is considered the main cause of disease.

While we do not have to accept the particular philosophical or cultural forms of this development of self-knowledge in Ayurveda, we must employ the same principles and approaches if we are to be able to use it as a tool to heal the mind and soul.

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PART II. LESSON 8

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What are the three bodies?
2. By what factors can the astral be awakened?
3. What are the five sheaths?
4. What are the seven levels of the cosmos?
5. What is the use of devotion to God in Ayurveda?
6. What is the importance of self-knowledge in Ayurveda?

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PART II. LESSON 9

YOGA AND AYURVEDIC PSYCHOLOGY 2.
THE FUNCTIONS OF THE MIND

Our mind or basic consciousness in general in Ayurveda (and Sankhya on which it is based) is called "antahkarana", the "inner organ". It has three basic levels as reason (buddhi), ego (ahankara) and emotion (manas). It is the basic organ from which both sensory and motor organs evolve. It is an organic entity operating according to certain laws and having right and wrong usages, like any other tool or vehicle. Its different statuses or levels of functioning gradually evolve and differentiate through the process of creation and cosmic evolution. To understand the psychological approach of Yoga and Ayurveda we must learn the nature and operation of the mind.

It should be noted also that the term "Manas", which specifically means emotion also more generally can stand for the mind as a whole in Vedic and Vedantic literature.

THE NATURE OF THE MIND

ATOMIC NATURE OF THE MIND

The mind (antahkarana) is considered to be atomic (anutva) in nature. It is, in fact, the basic atom or prime element of all creation. All creation is based upon and manifests through the mind as its essential instrument. Mind is the prime matter or structural component of the universe. All of nature works through the mind as its first product and source of its laws.

Because of this atomic nature of the mind we can only focus on one thought or perception at a time. Our awareness has the nature of a point. This allows us to direct it in specific directions. At the same time it gives it a tendency to become narrow and to attach us to certain points of view.

Though the mind is atomic in nature it can still pervade the body as a whole, just as a dot of sandalwood oil can pervade the entire body by its fragrance. In this way it can not only focus on different parts of the body but can motivate it as a whole. Similarly, it can pervade our entire field of perception.

MOBILE NATURE OF THE MIND

The mind is also unstable or constantly changing (chala), as it is not only a point in space but also a point in time. Our stream of consciousness is nothing but a rapid series of these point flashes of mental activity. In fact, the mind is the prime point from which the ideas of time and space are constructed, like the point of the pen of an artist.

The mind thus is only a series of thoughts or mental actions, never the same for an instant. Through a quick shifting of point focuses we are able to construct an idea of the objects that we see or contemplate.

SUBTLE AND SENSITIVE NATURE OF THE MIND

The mind is also subtle (sukshma) in nature, being the most subtle form of matter. Hence it is difficult to see and requires much attention to observe objectively.

Moreover, the mind is very sensitive. It is the organ of sensitivity underlying all the senses. It is like a relay station between the external and the internal whereby information comes in and action goes out. Hence the mind can be easily affected and disturbed, easily excited, depressed or distracted. It can often overreact to momentary impressions. It is always transferring information and energy.

DUALISTIC NATURE OF THE MIND

As an organ mediating between the outer and the inner, the mind also has a dualistic nature. The mind moves between opposites and is thereby prone to ambivalence. It is capable of many different points of view from one side or another. It can easily become caught in opposites, go to extremes or become the victim of its own tendency to reverse itself.

DIFFICULTY IN CONTROLLING THE MIND

Because of its volatile nature the mind is hard to grasp and hard to control. It has a nature and movement of its own, which it tends to impress upon us or make us vulnerable to. Indeed, there is nothing more difficult to control than the mind. Human life is nothing but a struggle to learn to control the mind. If we have done that we have done everything and accomplished the most difficult thing in the entire universe.

Inability to control the mind causes sorrow and is behind the disease process. Yet control of the mind is not an imposition of an idea or will upon it, which are still products of its field of disturbance. It is only possible through the peace of the deeper consciousness. Ayurveda aims at harmonizing the body and life-force to make control of the mind easier.

A PRACTICAL EXPERIMENT WITH THE MIND

We can examine for ourselves this nature and action of the mind. Take any object, a tree, for example. Focus your attention upon it. Note how your attention changes from instant to instant. Note how through a series of shifting perceptions you construct the idea or total form of the tree. Try to hold your attention on one point on the tree. Notice how it cannot stay in one place.

As a further experiment, examine your emotions. Note also their changing nature. See how closely like and dislike, love and hate are bound together. Next examine your thoughts. See how one thought follows another in rapid succession in a compulsive and erratic flow. Finally examine the ego or "I thought", see how this is the root of the other thoughts and how the mind is basically self-enclosed in its function.

Learn to use your mind like a tool, develop various such experiments or observations, and in this way you will cease to be the victim of this subtle instrument.

CONNECTION OF MIND AND BODY

In the seventh month of gestation the mind enters the body along with the soul and the seeds of karma to be worked out in the coming life. At death, the mind and soul along with the essence of impressions gathered in life leave the body. During life the mind connects us via the senses to the outer world. This makes us victims of all the changes and vicissitudes of external nature, as the energy coming in through the senses easily the disturbs our highly volatile minds.

THE FOUR LEVELS OF THE MIND

Four basic levels of the mind are recognized in the Yoga system according to their difference of function. These are

1. Unconscious mind (chitta)
2. Subconscious or emotional mind (manas)
3. Ego or self-conscious mind (ahankara)
4. Reason or conscious mind (buddhi)

UNCONSCIOUS MIND/ CHITTA

The general ground of consciousness, the unconscious mind that is the storehouse of all memory and impressions and links us to the material world, is called "Chitta". Chitta exists everywhere in nature, even in inanimate objects, and is responsible for autonomic functions in the body, as well as the mechanical and organic structure of the cosmos. It functions even in sleep. Its main function is memory on an organic level.

Chitta is the collective unconscious and contains the subtle impressions of all of our experiences. In hypnosis our mind can be brought to the level of the Chitta wherein we can remember everything that has ever happened to us. It holds all the other functions of the mind latent within itself as a seed.

EMOTION OR SUBCONSCIOUS MIND/ MANAS

The general conditioned consciousness or desire mind, including our subconscious (or personal unconscious), is called "Manas", as mentioned under the twenty-four tattvas. Manas is the mind in its twofold nature as a general sense organ and organ of action. Thereby it works to coordinate the activities of both the sense organs and organs of action.

It is generally our capacity for thought and consideration (samkalpa), primarily emotion, our capacity to react to our impressions. It is based upon desire and polarizes itself as like and dislike, love and hate.

Emotion and imagination are the reverberation of outgoing mind to the impressions of the senses that it does not have the stability to objectively observe and assimilate.

Manas, the outgoing mind, is the quantitative side of the mind that allows us to take in and coordinate information. It affords a horizontal dimension for correlating the information of the senses. Yet in itself it is still largely a reflex, habit or instinct, not an articulate consciousness. It is operative to a great extent even in the animal realm.

Manas or the emotional mind has no values or principles. Its goal is only the expansion and exploration of the realm of the senses, seeking pleasure, avoiding pain. Its purpose is to allow experience and expansion in the realm of the senses, not to establish values (this belongs to the more interior levels of the mind). As long as we operate on this level we are purely sensate creatures. We are victims of the emotions aroused by our senses, the attraction to pleasurable sensations and the aversion to negative ones.

Manas has an outgoing energy by its connection to the senses. By its function our minds tend to be always externally directed and it is very difficult to look within and see ourselves or examine directly the workings of the mind. The weight of sensory information through it draws us outwardly and creates a darkness or ignorance as to our internal nature. It can block our mental functioning or retard our spiritual evolution by preventing inner awareness.

Hence Manas has a characteristic inertia or resistance that we experience as the pull of the senses and the seeking of pleasure. It has an outward and downward energy that keeps our consciousness from expanding and ascending.

As Manas (emotion) is prior to ego in evolution, it cannot be used to transcend the ego. It can only serve to justify it. This does not mean there is anything wrong with it. It has its proper place but that is not in ascertaining truth or establishing values but only in allowing us to connect with the senses and respond to them. As we evolve more in awareness we become less affected by the energies transmitted to from the senses via the emotional mind. This occurs through the development of the subtler levels and functions of the mind.

EGO OR SELF-CONSCIOUS MIND/ AHANKARA

The more specific self-consciousness or ego consciousness is called "Ahankara", as also under the tattvas. Its activity is called conceit, pride or self-image (abhimana). It is the "I-thought" behind the other thoughts of the mind. It is the basis of fragmentation in the mind and strife in the world, as it is based upon the principle of division.

Its action is a series of identifications of the self or subjective aspect of our being with some objective form or quality, like the body or various mental states. Manas or outgoing mind is a series of internalized emotional reactions. The ego appropriates these as "I" like this or "I" do not like that. "I" love this or "I" hate that or "I am this" or "this is mine". Hence the ego gives energy to the reactions of the mind.

The ego concept arises from the atomic nature of the mind. Because we can only focus on a point at a time, we develop the idea of ourselves as a separate point in life. From this idea of division behind the ego, separate bodies evolve. As long as we are unable to control our minds, their instability will give rise to the ego and all of its shifting states of moods.

The ego mediates between the outer and inner worlds and is a point of interchange between them. It allows us to acquire and achieve things in the outer world and can give a certain control of the emotions. By its point like nature it tends to always have a narrow focus or bias, in which it becomes the center or most important factor in the world.

For this reason, all human beings have a sense of pride and we like to think that we or what we are identified with, like our religion, our country, our race, our class, our family, or even our form of medicine, is the best. This process of pride, however, causes us to look down on others and creates conflict among human beings.

The ego then operates through emotion to acquire sensations in the outer world that allow it to expand and feel good about itself. Yet it is inherently limited and productive of separation and, through it, unhappiness.

On the positive side, the ego allows for greater focus of the mind. It also helps consciousness differentiate itself from the external nature. But it is not the final goal of Nature"s evolution, nor does it represent who we really are. Nor is it a functioning of intelligence. It is a transitional phase between an outward directed mind (Manas) under the control of the forces of the external nature, and an inward directed mind in harmony with the deeper principles and powers of life.

CONSCIOUS MIND OR INTELLIGENCE/ BUDDHI

The rational, judgmental part of the mind is called "Buddhi", intelligence (from the root "bud", to awaken or perceive) and is our individual portion of Mahat. Through it we can discriminate and ascertain (adhyavasaya) the true and the false, the good and the bad, the real and the unreal.

Buddhi is the qualitative part of the mind that allows us to establish values and give a principle to our lives, the basis of conscience. It is the objective or rational part of the mind which is capable of detached observation. Through its development we can evolve beyond the ego.

The Buddhi has a dual nature, as the intelligence sheath mentioned above. The nature of its functioning is the key to evolution in humanity. Directed outwardly it constructs an idea of reality based upon the senses and gives us the notion of an outer world of enjoyment as the basic purpose of life, the ultimate expression of which is the scientific/materialistic view of life and its commercial bias. Thereby it directs us towards various outer goals in life, like wealth or pleasure.

Directed inwardly, taking the eternal or the pure consciousness to be the real, it leads us back through the cosmic principles to our true Self and Spirit. We learn to perceive directly and ascertain objectively the nature of things. Hence the Buddhi contains wisdom or Prajna. Directed inwardly it gives wisdom which brings us to enlightenment. When fully awakened or enlightened one becomes a Buddha. Hence only when the Buddhi is functioning on a higher level can we be considered to be intelligent, mature and responsible human beings.

Directed outwardly the Buddhi becomes intellect and makes us discriminating of name and form in the external world. We get caught up in ideas of status and possessions. We rationalize and justify our emotions and beliefs, rather than inquire objectively as to what is truth.

Directed inwardly it becomes intelligence and allows us to discriminate between the inner and the outer, between reality and appearance. We free ourselves from outer belief structures.

Directed outwardly its function is not independent but through Manas and Ahankara, emotion and ego. Directed inwardly its function manifests pure consciousness.

INTELLIGENCE AND THE DISEASE PROCESS

According to Ayurveda all disease arises from "the failure of wisdom", Prajnaparadha, which is this lower or wrong functioning of the Buddhi.

Through it we wrongly use the body and senses and exploit the external world. It is a kind of willful self-indulgence wherein we use the body and external nature for our selfish pleasure and do not adequately consider its organic nature and needs.

Through wisdom we learn to use the body and senses in their right way, according to their nature and function, as vehicles for consciousness and the expression of the soul.

The ego drive towards selfish enjoyment is the downward moving energy of the Buddhi. It causes us to abuse ourselves and others for transient enjoyment. Wisdom is the upward moving energy of the Buddhi wherein we learn to act with compassion, for the good of all, and for the fulfillment of the soul, which is the delight in the eternal values behind life.

Needless to say, modern culture is full of this failure of wisdom. Reason in the lower and outer sense has almost succeeding in eradicating reason in its higher and inner sense (wisdom). Modern culture is so encased itself in the lower idea of the world and the process of exploitation that goes with it, that we are in danger of destroying ourselves altogether. Hence Ayurveda is of great importance today. It shows us the right way of relating to the physical body and through it the right way of relating to the life and nature around us.

The story of Genesis in the Bible reflects the relationship of Buddhi and Manas as reason and emotion. These are the male and female sides of our nature, symbolized by Adam and Eve, the first man and woman. Emotion, the feminine side of our nature, offers to reason, the masculine side, the apple, the fruit of the tree of good and evil, which symbolizes the experience of the senses. She is motivated by the serpent in the tree, which is the illusion force of the senses that manifests mainly through the glamour of sex.

As long as reason is directed outwardly it cannot refuse the pleasure of the senses, or fail to respond to the emotional prejudices of the mind. In this way it is cast out of the garden of peace and is trapped in the sorrow of the good and evil, the duality of the emotions. Adam and Eve symbolize the fallen state or lower function of reason and emotion.

In that garden is another tree, that of immortal life. This is the tree of discrimination, the higher function of reason as directed towards the eternal. For that is the higher feminine nature of the mind as wisdom (prajna, a feminine term in Sanskrit, or the Greek sophia, which is also feminine, ie. the virgin Mary or pure receptive mind). Once this is awakened we can go beyond the influence of the senses and emotion to true perception and compassion. We can return to the garden of immortal life.

THE SOUL/ JIVA

Our individual soul or reincarnating consciousness is called the "Jiva" or Jivatman, the individual Self. It is our individual portion of Divine consciousness. It is not always distinguished from the Buddhi in its awakened state or higher function. This is our true individuality as apart from the false personality or separate self of the ego. It leads us back to unity whereas the ego drives us into division and multiplicity.

The higher function of reason affords us this higher sense of self-identity. This is the identity of consciousness, not the self-image or ego that depends for its being upon the object or quality with which it is identified. This occurs through the self-knowledge that true intelligence gives us.

This state of the mind is also called Knowledge (Jnana), as the mind on this purest level is able to reflect the nature of reality.

THE LEVELS OF THE MIND AND THE QUALITIES OF NATURE

THE LEVELS OF MIND AND THE GUNAS

The mind itself (antahkarana) is called sattva, as mentioned previously as sattva is the quality of light that allows for perception.

Chitta, unconscious mind, is tamasic in nature as the inert ground of awareness.

Manas, emotional mind, has both tamas, its connection to the senses that gives it an inertia towards the outer world, and rajas, its inherent motility.

Ahankara, self-conscious mind, is rajasic, as it is always motivated, always seeking results.

The Buddhi, conscious or intelligent mind, is essentially sattvic as the instrument of direct perception but it can be disturbed by the rajas of the ego.

The Jiva or soul is sattvic and the development of pure sattva is its spiritual growth.

THE LEVELS OF MIND AND THE KINGDOMS OF NATURE

Chitta, the mind in its latent, unconscious or involved state, prevails in the mineral kingdom.

Manas, the feeling principle, comes into functioning in plants.

Animals are developing ego, Ahankara, and hence become territorial.

Human beings are intended for the development of intelligence (buddhi) but normally we digress into our well developed but no longer appropriate animal ego and expand it further, according to the lower or false development of the Buddhi. For the development of intelligence, freedom to not develop it or develop it wrongly must be allowed.

The soul or Jiva is developed among the gods as well as in the higher portions of humanity.

THE LEVELS OF MIND AND THE FIVE SHEATHS

The five levels of the mind correspond to the five sheaths.

Chitta, unconscious mind, underlies the food sheath;
Manas, subconscious mind or emotion, underlies the vital or breath sheath;
Ahankara, self-conscious mind, generally underlies the mental sheath;
Buddhi, conscious mind, underlies the intelligence sheath;
Jiva, the soul, underlies the bliss sheath.

THE LEVELS OF MIND AND THE FIVE ELEMENTS

They also can be seen as modifications or precursors of the five elements:

Chitta, unconscious mind, derives from earth;
Manas as subconscious mind from water;
Ahankara as self-conscious mind from fire (hence its destructive nature;
Buddhi as intelligence from air and
Jiva, the soul, from ether.

Yet this modification is not of the gross or even subtle elements but of their inner or causal principles, the tanmatras that is really meant.

The mind as a subtle form of matter is mainly composed of fire, air and ether. It perceives and discriminates through fire, acts and adapts through air and renews itself through ether.

PSYCHOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES

Each level of the mind has an underlying psychological principle.

Behind Chitta, unconscious mind, is ignorance and fear, the basic dark or involved state of consciousness. Fear is the root of the mind.

Behind Manas, emotional mind, is desire, the clinging or attachment which arises to protect us from fear. Desire is a form of seduction, hypnosis or loss of consciousness. It produces attraction that creates attachment to the external.

Behind Ahankara, self-conscious mind or ego, is anger or aggression, which is the attempt to impose our ego-will outwardly. It is the repulsion that comes from attraction and also the attempt to consolidate or possess what we want.

Behind Buddhi or intelligence is knowledge, which may be lower or higher, our attempt to determine the objective nature of things.

Behind the Jiva or soul is spiritual aspiration, our portion of the Divine consciousness that seeks to return to its greater nature.

IGNORANCE

Hence the lower levels of the mind are all based upon and evolve out of ignorance or lack of true knowledge. The higher levels can only come into function when we face our basic ignorance.

This ignorance is not some exotic theory or fearful original sin. It is the basic fact of our existence that we do not know who really are or what reality is, that we do not know why we were born or what is the real meaning of our lives. This facing of our ignorance allows us to begin to inquire inwardly into what is the reality behind the outer appearances of our self and world.

Ayurveda is the beginning or foundation of this inquiry starting with the objective examination of the physical body. This process is the turning around of the function of the Buddhi or intelligence from the lower level, wherein we accept the appearances of the senses as real, to the higher level, wherein we learn to understand the basic nature of consciousness as reality.

As long as we do not understand the levels and functions of the mind we will be trapped in their psychological excesses; ignorance, desire and anger.

LEVELS OF MIND: SUMMARY

Chitta, the unconscious mind, represents the field of the mind as a whole; the greater portion of which is unconscious for us. We can represent it as a circle.

Manas, the outgoing or quantitative side of the mind, is like a horizontal line across the circle. Buddhi, the qualitative side, is like a vertical line. The ego, Ahankara, is the point in the center wherein these two lines cross.

The soul, Jiva, or knowledge, is when we bring the whole of Chitta, the unconscious mind, to consciousness by the upward and inward movement of intelligence. Otherwise dominated by the downward and outward movement of Manas, the sensory or desire mind, we become trapped in the forces of the external world and lose control of our own destiny.

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PART II. LESSON 9

STUDY QUESTIONS

This is a difficult section as it contains many abstract ideas. It is not necessary to grasp all these at once. So in the beginning try to grasp the main points.

1. What is the nature of the mind or internal organ?
2. What are the different levels of functioning in the mind?
3. How does the atomic nature of the mind serve to create the ego?
4. Why does Manas (emotion) drive us towards the external world?
5. What are the higher and lower functions of the Buddhi (reason)?
6. What is ignorance?
7. Why does Ayurveda stress the understanding of the mind?

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PART II. LESSON 10

YOGA AND AYURVEDIC PSYCHOLOGY 3.
THE SYSTEM OF YOGA

Yoga is the practical side of Sankhya, which is the science of observation, the spiritual science.

The main classical text for the Yoga system is the YOGA SUTRAS of Patanjali, which is over two thousand years old, and our exposition of Yoga is based mainly upon it.

According to Patanjali (Y.S.I.2) Yoga is defined as "the neutralization of the alternating waves of the mind", which we could render more simply as the negation of thought or the silencing of the mind. The waves of thought (vritti) are the dualistic ideas and emotions of the ego. These create a disturbance in the nature of consciousness and prevents the direct perception of reality.

THE YOGIC METHOD

Modern science is based upon the scientific method. This says that first you invent a theory about how things work and then you look for data to prove it. Once you have enough data the theory can be said to be a law. Sankhya and Yoga says that this approach is not objective or scientific at all. The reason is that any theory or preconception will always tend to color our perception and thus create data to justify it. It is the theory that determines what the facts are, as it establishes what we are looking for.

It is like a man putting orange glasses on and then trying to find data to prove the world is orange. Naturally, there is much in this vast and variegated world that may tend to give some sort of justification to any number of theories.

The Yogic method is more scientific than the scientific method. It says that first you must empty your mind of all assumptions and preconceptions. You must approach the object without any predetermined ideas or judgements, with a mind that is completely still and open, like a mirror. Then it can objectively reflect the nature of that object. You must not have any barrier of opinions between yourself and the object but should unite with it completely in the silence of mind. Then its nature will be communicated to you. This is the "Yogic science of direct perception". According to this spiritual science it is only in the unity of the observer and the observed that truth can be known.

Science approaches reality in a measured and mediated manner, from the outside. Its image of reality is a series of numbers or equations. But according to Yoga reality lies in the immeasurable and the unique. The reality of things can only be experienced but never really understood in terms of a mental pattern. All mental patterns and measurements Yoga sees as "Maya", illusion. It says that the practical realm is not the real realm but only the superficial. The reality lies in the consciousness that underlies all existence and can only be known through direct perception.

Hence there is no real truth in any theory. Truth is only when the mind is one with the object of its perception and all theories are barriers to that.

THE YOGIC METHOD IN AYURVEDA

Ayurveda is also based upon the Yogic Method and aims to develop the faculty of direct perception in both its practitioners and their patients. Ayurveda was originally devised in this way, as discovered by the direct perception of the sages in meditation. It is not a theory but a way in which nature has disclosed to humanity the organic workings of the life force. It is nature's healing system.

Hence in approaching healing we must first learn the Yogic art of emptying and silencing the mind. We must approach our patients with a receptive mind and allow their nature to be mirrored to us. The terms of Ayurveda, like the three humors and five elements, are a natural language of organizing the information revealed by direct perception but without that direct perception they will just be additional ideas imposed upon things that prevent us from seeing what they really are.

SELF-KNOWLEDGE AND YOGA

According to the Vedic approach Self-knowledge is the highest form of knowledge. It is the basis of all other forms of knowledge. It is the one thing through knowing which everything is known. The great scriptures of India, the Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita revolve around this fundamental truth.

Yoga teaches us how to understand the realities of the outer world, the world of nature but as a means of directing us inward. It teaches us that the outer world exists for inner experience and self-knowledge. It reveals to us that when we approach anything in nature through direct perception we find that on the deepest level it is intrinsically one with our own consciousness. It guides us back through the fundamental laws and powers of nature (the Tattvas) to return us to our own Self and seeing nature (the Purusha).

We learn to reintegrate the confusing multiplicity of the outer world into the forms of the five elements. These we learn to integrate through the five sense organs and five organs of actions, as manifestations of the five tanmatras, back into forms of mental experience. The mind, as the source of both the external and the internal, we learn to silence to return to our fundamental spiritual reality or Purusha.

SELF-KNOWLEDGE AND SELF-CARE IN AYURVEDA

Ayurveda is also based upon the principle of Self-knowledge. Its goal is not simply health as an end in itself but health as a basis for self-understanding, for the recognition of our true nature and living in accord with it. Hence Ayurveda naturally directs us towards the path of Yoga. From its point of view, therefore, it is not enough to treat patients from the outside. We must aid them in their self-understanding and self-unfoldment. Ayurveda thus always aims at self-care, at teaching the individual how to live in harmony with their own nature.

It is not enough that we as practitioners or healers know certain things about our patients and how to improve their condition, what matters is that they know these things and learn how to apply the tools for themselves that will change their condition.

Without restoring some orientation towards self-knowledge to the patient, Ayurveda is not being applied according to its deeper principles. For this reason the educational part of Ayurveda is perhaps more important than the treatment side. Its self-care approach is perhaps more important than its clinical approach.

This emphasis on self-knowledge rather on just some outer cure is the spiritual integrity of Ayurveda that all devoted to it must strive to preserve. It makes it a part of this greater spiritual science and not just the kind of truncated materialistic medical system we have today that usually ignores any broader or deeper meaning to life.

The measure of the effectiveness of our treatment is not how many patients we have, how much money we are paid, how famous we are, or even how many conditions we can cure. These are things of apparent value only that can be brought about by many things. The real measure of Ayurvedic success is the extent to which we have directed people towards greater self-knowledge and self-responsibility and allowed them to become masters of their own destiny in life.

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YOGA PSYCHOLOGY

While modern Western psychology often aims at analyzing our emotions in order normalize our sense of self, Yoga psychology states that our preoccupation with ourselves and our thinking process is itself the root of all psychological problems. Instead it provides practical psycho-physical techniques for changing our awareness.

It is concerned with bringing us to knowledge of our true Self, which is pure consciousness. For this knowledge of the ego and trying to sort out our personal identity may be an obstruction.

Ayurveda also uses Yoga Psychology for its treatment of the mind and mental disorders.

THE EIGHT LIMBS OF YOGA/ ASHTANGA YOGA

For the understanding of nature and the development of consciousness classical Yoga gives an eightfold approach or eight limbs (ashtanga). These are not really stages. They are like the limbs of the body. Each in its proper role is necessary for right functioning of the being, though all are not of equal importance.

1. YAMA/ Right Attitude
2. NIYAMA/ Right Action
3. ASANA/ Physical Postures
4. PRANAYAMA/ Breath Control
5. PRATYAHARA/ Control of the Senses
6. DHARANA/ Control of the Mind
7. DHYANA/ Meditation
8. SAMADHI/ Absorption

YAMA

The five yamas, literally "disciplines" are non-violence (ahimsa), truthfulness (satya), control of sexual energy (brahmacharya), non-stealing (asteya) and non-clinging (anabhinivesha).

These are the basic attitudes that allow us to evolve in life. The most important is non-violence; not wishing harm to any living being in thought, word or deed. This is the most important attitude also for anyone who wishes to bring an energy of healing into the world.

If our basic attitudes in life are not positive, healthy and compassionate, we cannot have any harmony of body or mind. Hence right attitude is important to consider in treating all diseases.

NIYAMA

The five niyamas, literally "restraints" are contentment (santosha), purity (shaucha), self-study (svadhyaya), self-discipline (tapas), surrender to God (Ishwara pranidhana).

These are the basic actions or observances necessary to evolve in life. Self-study and self-discipline are also the basis of Ayurvedic life-regimes for constitution balancing.

If our discipline or manner of action in life is not harmonious we do not have the foundation for accomplishing anything of enduring value for ourselves or the world.

ASANA

Asana is the various yogic postures aimed at bringing balance and harmony to the physical body, particularly the musculoskeletal system that is the support of the body. Asana is part of the Ayurvedic treatment system for the physical body. Postures can be used increase vitality or to balance the humors. They can be adjusted to target certain organs or weak spots in the body.

PRANAYAMA

Pranayama is control of the breath, which is the development and expansion of the energy of the life-force. It is another important Ayurvedic method for increasing vigor and vitality and promoting the power of healing.

It consists of deepening and extending the breath until it can be lead into a condition of peace. When the breath is at peace, the life-force and through it the senses, emotions and mind are put to rest.

PRATYAHARA

Pratyahara is control of the senses, which is essentially withdrawal from distraction. It is not suppression of the senses but their right application, emphasized in Ayurveda as the basis for health. All diseases in Ayurveda are seen to be based on wrong use of the senses. It is how we use our senses that determines the kind of energy we take in from the external world. That either nourishes or deranges us.

Pratyahara techniques involve either shutting off the senses like closing the eyes or ears, which is the gross form of this approach, or using our senses with attention rather than distraction, which is the subtle or inner form. Various forms of mantra or visualization are also employed here for redirecting and learning to control the energy of the senses, which is essentially sound and light. Inner sensory sources may be tapped like the inner sounds (nada), which feed us a more subtle kind of impression.

Pratyahara techniques may involve creating a special environment for the patient, like a retreat in a mountain cabin, or setting up an altar or healing space. This can aid in the insulation of the individual from vulnerability to external influences.

DHARANA

Dharana is control of the mind, which is right attention. It is the capacity to focus on or give all our mental energy to the object of our examination. It is the quality of our attention in life that determines our state of mind.

Dharana techniques involve various means of directing or controlling our attention, like concentration on particular objects or ideas until the mind becomes one-pointed.

DHYANA

Dhyana is meditation, which is our capacity to sustain our attention on the object of our examination. It is our ability to meditate that enables us to mirror or objectively perceive the truth of things.

Meditation techniques more properly belong to Pratyahara or Dharana. True meditation is the natural state of awareness, not a method. All methods belong to Prakriti (matter) but meditation is the revelation of the Purusha (spirit), which is beyond form and action.

SAMADHI

Samadhi, absorption, is the capacity to become one with the object of our perception. It is the unity of the perceiver and the perceived in direct perception, through which alone the nature of reality can be known. It is our capacity to merge with things in consciousness that shows our joy and fulfillment in life. It brings us to the underlying Divine nature in all things and in ourselves. It is the natural outcome of true meditation.

The first two steps, yama and niyama, are the foundation of Yoga as the right attitudes and values for the practice to develop rightly.

The first five limbs of Yoga (yama, niyama, asana, prana;yama and pratyahara) are said to be "outer aids". They harmonize the outer aspects of our nature, body, breath and senses, to allow the inner or meditational process of Yoga to proceed.

The last three are said to be the "inner aids" (dharana, dhyana and samadhi). They are the main part of yoga as meditation or the discipline of the mind.

All eight are integral to the practice of Yoga and each serves to give proficiency in the others. Of them, asana is the most outward and superficial, but should not thereby be neglected.

All life is Yoga; that is all life is aiming consciously or unconsciously at reintegration and unification of its forces with the cosmic life. Yoga is not a new path we take upon ourselves but a way of becoming conscious of the movement of nature back towards pure awareness.

The purpose of Ayurveda is to aid in the outer process of Yoga to enable us to proceed with the inner process which is meditation. Hence it is part of the outer aids of Yoga.

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PART II. LESSON 10

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What is Yoga?
2. How are Yoga and Ayurveda related?
3. What is the Yogic Method and how does it compare with the scientific method?
4. What are the eight limbs of Yoga?
5. Why is meditation so central to Yoga?
6. Which stages of Yoga are most related to Ayurveda?

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PART II. LESSON 11

YOGA AND AYURVEDIC PSYCHOLOGY 4.
ANATOMY AND PHYSIOLOGY OF THE SUBTLE BODY

For understanding the subtle workings of the body and mind we must also examine the subtle body, its structure and functioning. For this most important is understanding the seven chakras.

THE SEVEN CHAKRAS

The practical techniques of Yoga involve awakening the energy of the subtle body or mind called the "Kundalini", the coiled energy or serpent force. This subtle body is composed of seven chakras or energy centers. "Chakra" means literally what revolves and also means a wheel. The chakras are important in Ayurveda as they show how the life-force, whose main nature is on a subtle level, directs and guides the physical body through the nervous system. A number of modern versions of these chakras exist in the Western world. This is the classical Yogic system presented here. It should be noted that the colors of the chakras differ according to their level and purity of function.

1. MULADHARA CHAKRA: The root center, said to be located at the base of the spine. Muladhara means "root foundation."

It has four petals and is the seat of earth. Its seed syllable (bija mantra) is Lam.

It rules the sense organ of smell, the nose, and the organ of action of the anus (elimination) and is the seat of apana vayu, the downward moving air.

On a physical level it relates to the sacral plexus and to the excretory system. In the endocrine system it works through the adrenals. On a psychological level it is the site of ignorance and fear (chitta).

2. SVADHISTHANA CHAKRA: Often called the "sex center" as it is located just above the root center in the region of the sex organs. Its Sanskrit name means the self-abode, as it is here where the Kundalini energy resides when coiled or hidden.

It possesses six petals and is the seat of water. Its seed syllable is Vam.

It rules the sense organ of taste, the tongue, and the organ of action of the penis (emission) and is the seat of vyana vayu, the outward moving air.

On a physical level it relates to the coccyx and to the urinogenital system. In the endocrine system it relates to the testes in men and the uterus in women. On a psychological level it is the site of desire and the desire mind (kama manas).

3. MANIPURA CHAKRA: Often called the navel center as it is located behind the navel. Manipura means "the city of gems", as this chakra is the seat of fire.

It has ten petals and rules fire. Its seed syllable is Ram.

It rules the sense organ of sight, the eyes, and the organ of action of the feet (movement). It is the seat of samana vayu, the equalizing air.

On a physical level it relates to the solar plexus and to the digestive system (particularly the liver and small intestine). Of the endocrine glands it relates to the pancreas. On a psychological level it relates to ego (ahankara).

4. ANAHATA CHAKRA: Often called the heart center as it is located on the spine at the level of the heart. Anahata means "unstruck sound", as it is from here that inner sounds or natural music of the subtle body arises.

It has twelve petals and is the seat of air. Its seed syllable is Yam.

It rules the sense organ of touch, the skin, and the organ of action of the hands (grasping). It is the seat of udana vayu, the upward moving air.

On a physical level it relates to the heart plexus and to the circulatory system. In the endocrine system it works through the thymus. On a psychological level it is the site of the intelligence (buddhi) and is the source of aspiration.

5. VISHUDDHA CHAKRA: Usually called the throat center as it is located in the region of the throat. Vishuddha means "very pure", as this center is very subtle.

It has sixteen petals and is the seat of ether. Its seed syllable is Ham.

It rules the organ of sound, the ears, and the organ of action of the mouth (expression). It is the seat of prana vayu, the inward moving air.

On a physical level it relates to the throat and larynx and to the respiratory system. In the endocrine system it works through the thyroid. On a psychological level it is the site of the individual soul (jiva) and is the source of inspiration.

6. AJNA CHAKRA: Called the third eye as that is located here. Ajna means "command" and this is called the center of command, as from here the other chakras are guided.

It has two petals (by some accounts forty-eight) and is the seat of the mind (antahkarana) and the mind space or mental ether

(which underlies the elemental ether). Its seed syllable is Ksham, meaning patience, peace and fortitude.

On an outer level, it rules the mind as both a sense organ and organ of action. It is the seat of the primary prana or life-force.

On a physical level it relates to the cerebellum and medulla oblongata, and governs the involuntary nervous system. In the endocrine system it works through the pituitary gland. On an inner or psychological level it is the site of the universal soul (visvatman).

7. SAHASRA PADMA CHAKRA: Called the head center as it is the same as the astral brain. Its Sanskrit name means the "thousand petalled lotus".

It has a thousand petals and is the seat of the spirit (Atman or Purusha). Its seed syllable is Om.

As the seat of the true Self it is the source and guide of all the energies of the body, the essence of life itself.

On a physical level it relates to the cerebrum and governs the voluntary nervous system. In the endocrine system it functions through the pineal gland. On an inner or psychological level it is the location of the supreme Self (paramatman).

It should be noted that by some views the third eye and head centers are considered to be two different functions of the same chakra.

THE CHAKRAS AND THE HUMORS

Most Vata disorders involve dysfunction of the root chakra, the metabolism of earth (which tends to be inadequate in Vata types) and apana vayu.

Most Kapha problems involve dysfunction of the sex center and the water metabolism.

Most Pitta problems involve dysfunction of the navel center and the fire metabolism.

Most physiological functions therefore occur mainly through the three lower chakras. These govern most of the processes in the physical body, the other chakras work on the subtle bodies. In the ordinary state of humanity it is mainly these three lower chakras that are at work and the powers of the higher chakras are often controlled, limited or diverted by them.

Most psychological problems involve dysfunction of the heart chakra and failure of the buddhi. This manifests as an inability to discriminate between fantasy and reality. Spiritual problems, as in lack of spiritual aspiration in life, involve the higher centers.

Diseases always involve chakra dysfunction but the inner function of the chakras require special practises to bring into function.

THE CHAKRAS AND ORIFICES OF THE BODY

Each chakra works through an orifice or opening in the human body. The root chakra relates to the anus. The sex chakra relates to the urethra. The navel chakra relates to the navel. The heart chakra relates to the breasts. The throat chakra relates to the mouth and nose. The third eye relates to the eyes and the crown chakra relates to the ears.

Through their respective orifices the chakras express themselves in the external world. Hence listening is the highest art and is able to free the consciousness.

At these sites we can apply various gems or oils to help harmonize chakra energy or do various forms of bodywork.

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THE NADIS

The channels (srotas) in the physical body interconnect with the channels (nadis) of the subtle body. Seventy two thousand nadis are said to exist. Of these three are most important.

THE SUSHUMNA

The most significant and most central of the nadis is called the "Sushumna". It runs through the center of the astral spine and corresponds to the central spinal canal in the physical body. It controls all the other functions of the body and the chakras that are strung like lotuses upon it, function by its power.

It has the nature of ether and is balanced in terms of the biological humors. It is activated by the Kundalini or Prana Shakti.

THE IDA AND PINGALA

To the left and right of the Sushumna run two other major nadis whose movement intertwines (like a series of figure eights put one on top of the other, as in a caduceus). These also start at the base of the spine and move from side to side, chakra to chakra. The left nadi ends at the left nostril, the right nadi at the right.

The left nadi is called the Ida or Lunar nadi, as it has the energy of the Moon. It is white in color, feminine and has a Kapha nature, is cool, wet and soothing. Ida means literally inspiration and refreshment. It operates more during the night and gives sleep. Psychologically it promotes emotion, feeling, love and attachment.

The right nadi is called the Pingala or Solar nadi, as it has the energy of the Sun. Pingala means red. It is masculine and has a Pitta nature, is hot, dry and stimulating. It operates more during the day and promotes activity. Psychologically it promotes reason, perception, analysis and discrimination.

BALANCING THE NADIS

When the prana or life-force is balanced, when the energy in the solar and lunar nadis is equalized, then the Kundalini awakens and the prana enters the Sushumna. This brings to function the occult faculties of the subtle body and takes us into a higher state of mind and perception.

The key to health of the subtle body is thus in balancing the flow of energy through the nadis. Just like the channels of the physical body, the nadis can be vitiated by excess or deficient flow, blockage of flow or flow out of the proper course.

Excess flow through the nadis manifests as hyperactivity of the mind or emotional hysteria, including such states as dizziness, vertigo and insomnia, or vivid dreams and hallucinations. Deficient flow manifests as hypoactivity of mind and emotions, dullness of the senses, fatigue and apathy.

Blockage in the nadis manifests as emotional blockage, nervous tension, difficulty in self-expression and severe emotional pain. Flow out of the proper channel manifests as hallucinations, severe mental, emotional or nervous pain, inappropriate and extreme emotional outbursts, neurosis and possibly insanity.

Hence these factors are very much like those that derange the channels of the mind, as we have already mentioned.

Most mind altering drugs act by increasing the flow through the nadis. This tends to overstimulate them or burn them out. Hence it results in deficient flow, as in the down period that follows the high. This shows the weakening of flow through the nadis that the artificial stimulation of the drug has promoted.

The nadis are deranged by wrong attitudes, negative emotions, egoism, bad mental digestion or poor intake of impressions, and physical factors like wrong diet (too heavy or Ama forming food), lack of exercise or shallow breathing and excess sex. Suppression of emotion is the main factor for blocking them. Drugs or forceful exercise, breathing or meditational practices are additional factors.

Balancing the nadis is much like balancing Prana, Tejas and Ojas in the mind. It is subtle and requires sensitivity, patience and forbearance. It cannot be done quickly or forcefully or by an act of will. These are rajasic factors that increase the imbalance. Sattva is necessary to balance the nadis.

CLEANSING THE NADIS

Clearing and cleansing the nadis (nadi shodhana) is the basis of treating the astral body and for treating the mind and emotions ruled by it. This is done through counseling, meditation (of a more

formless or silent nature), Pranayama, mantra and the use of gems, though physical remedial measures like asana, bodywork, herbs and diet can be helpful. It is also the basis for yoga practice or opening the chakras.

If we try to awaken the Kundalini or open the chakras while the nadis are not clear we can drive subtle toxic substances into the Sushumna. There their negative affects will be magnified by the greater energy of the Kundalini and they will be able to wreak havoc on the subtle body. They may cause the Kundalini to move in a wrong direction or may damage, burn out or blow out one of the chakras. Once such damage is done it is very hard to correct and sometimes takes several incarnations to completely heal, because its affect weakens the soul's ability to control its process of incarnation, which occurs through the subtle body.

OPENING THE CHAKRAS

According to the Yoga system the chakras are not opened in ordinary humanity. Their function is more by reflection than direct action. To awaken even the lower chakras takes a good deal of yogic discipline and effort and brings about occult faculties unknown to ordinary human action.

Hence most chakra balancing or unblocking of chakra energy done by healing practitioners today is not really opening the chakras, which would literally blow our minds and radically alter our state of consciousness, giving us superhuman powers. Such chakra work is usually involved with harmonizing the subtle physical counterparts of the chakras, not their astral site.

However, the chakras can be temporarily opened through the use of drugs or strong mental techniques. But in Yoga the opening of the chakras is not always sought after, particularly the opening of the lower chakras. Yoga aims at the opening and silencing of the mind. This works more directly with the higher astral chakras and with the causal body and inner Self beyond that.

Opening the lower chakras can be a distraction as it makes us vulnerable to the forces of the lower astral world, which is a plane of illusion and delusion wherein the after death states exist, as well as various ghostly and demonic forces. Done prematurely it can cause emotional imbalance or possession. It can increase the negative powers of the lower chakras and create greater power of lust or greed and stronger will of the ego.

Spiritual knowledge is gained only at the level of the heart chakra. Below that subtle vital and mental powers are gained which can still be expropriated by the ego and encourage illusion and false imagination in the mind. Such superegos often set themselves up as spiritual masters and mislead many people.

Many yoga practises aim at staying in the Sushumna, which is the void of pure awareness and arising through it, rather than going out of it to the chakras. This is thought to be the most direct path to higher consciousness.

Hence we should not naively work with the chakras or the subtle body. More harm than good can usually be done. It is better to first work with calming the mind and cleansing the heart. It is also important for the physical body to be relatively pure or balanced first, as this eliminates the gross impurities that might otherwise filter on to a subtle level.

THE AURA

Various different kinds of radiances are emitted by our different sheaths or bodies. Each has its own aura. Most specifically the aura is the energy field of the astral body. When the flow in the nadis is balanced the aura is clear and intact. When the flow is blocked impairments or holes in the aura emerge. When it is deficient, the aura is weak.

When the aura is impaired the immune system is weakened. We also lose our emotional integrity and can be easily imbalanced by external factors, sensations or emotions. Our character and will become weak.

Hence in the healing process we always aim at restoring strength and integrity to the aura. It is the energy field that protects the physical body and allows our individual life-force to work within it. When weakened the negative life-force around us (apana vayu) sets a process of decay going inside us. The aura is strengthened by gems, colors and the other remedial measures for cleansing and balancing the subtle channels (nadis). The aura is mainly a function of Ojas. When sufficient it provides adequate fuel for the aura. Hence strengthening Ojas and strengthening the aura always go together.

THE FOURTEEN MAJOR NADIS

We have already discussed the three main Nadis or channels of the subtle body. Eleven more are recognized. They are different from the nerves of the physical body or the acupuncture meridians as we can see. They relate to the Manovaha Srotas, the channels of the mind. These fourteen are as follows. Each is identified by the gate or point (aperture) in the body it supplies.

1. ALAMBUSHA

It runs from the base of the spine back to the tip of the rectum and supplies Prana to the organs of elimination.

2. KUHU

It runs from the base of the spine forward to the end of the penis or vagina and supplies Prana to the reproductive organs, as well as to the urinary organs connected to them.

3. VISVODHARA

It runs from the base of the spine up to the stomach and supplies Prana to the digestive system. Its aperture is the navel.

4. VARUNA

It runs from the base of the spine and supplies Prana to the entire body generally through the respiratory, circulatory and sebaceous systems. Its aperture is the skin.

5. HASTIJIHVA
6. YASHASVATI

These two supply Prana to the feet and end in the big toe. They also, by other accounts, supply the hands and end in the thumb. Yashasvati goes to the right hand and foot; Hastijihva to the left. They govern our voluntary muscles and the movement of the limbs. Their energy comes to a center in the middle of the hand and foot and from there radiates out to the five fingers or toes, ending primarily in the thumb and big toe.

7. PAYASVINI

It goes to the right ear and supplies Prana to it. It also governs the right eustachian tube.

8. GANDHARI

It goes to the left eye and supplies Prana to it.

9. PUSHA

It goes to the right eye and supplies Prana to it.

10. SHANKHINI

It goes to the left ear and supplies Prana to it. It also governs the left eustachian tube.

11. SARASWATI

It goes to the tongue and supplies Prana to it. It also covers the mouth and throat generally.

12. IDA

It goes to the left nostril and supplies Prana to it. It also governs the left nasal passage.

13. PINGALA

It goes to the right nostril and supplies Prana to it. It also governs the right nasal passage.

14. SUSHUMNA, the central channel.
It goes from the base of the spine to the top of the head. It also energizes the spine, the brain, the nerve tissue and supports the bone.
These channels are explained as follows----

"The muladhara (or root chakra) has in its center a triangle. From the middle of this triangle the Sushumna begins, through the middle portion of the stem of the Vina (the Backbone). It ends at the aperture of Brahma (at the top of the head), ten digits away from the tip of the nose."
"From the root of the Sushumna arises a channel called the Alambusha, which extends to rectum."
"A channel called Kuhu arises from the tip of the triangle (from the Sushumna in the Muladhara triangle) and extends through (the center) of the sexual organ."
"On the left and right side of the triangle two channels, Visvodhara and Varuna climb up, one inside the stomach, the other going all over."
"The two nerves called Hastijihva and Yashasvati extend to the feet and the big toe."
"The two going inside the two nostrils are called Ida and Pingala. The two going inside the two eyes are called Gandhari and Pusha. The one going to the tip of the tongue is called Saraswati. This makes fourteen channels in all."

"In the middle of the triangle in the root chakra are situated the two nerves Sushumna and Alambusha. They are in front and behind. Beginning from the tip of the triangle arise in a clockwise direction Kuhu and Varuna. Afterwards arise Yashasvati and Pingala. Then Pusha and Payasvini. Then Saraswati and Shankhini. Then Gandhari. Then Ida and Hastijihva. Finally arises Visvodhara. These nerves supply respectively the aperture at the top of the head (Brahmarandhra), the gates of elimination, reproduction, the entire body, the big toe, the left nostril, left eye, left ear, tip of the tongue, right ear, right eye, right nostril, feet and inside the stomach."

The nine gates of the body are the right and left nostrils, the right and left ears, the right and left eyes, the mouth, urethra and anus (three groups of two and three groups of one). The tenth gate is the point at the top of the head. Additional minor gates are the right foot and hand, and the left foot and hand, which make two more. Two more are the navel (the stomach) and the body as a whole (the skin). The fourteen channels supply these.
Hence we see that all the fourteen channels arise from the base of the spine. Only two, the Sushumna and the Alambusha arise directly from the center of the root chakra. The others arise from the small triangle around the center. All end at different apertures of the body, which they supply.

Our energy generally rises through the Sushumna. It is drained downwards by Alambusha and Kuhu. The pure Prana rises through Sushumna, the impure Prana dissipates through Alambusha.

As the Pingala and Ida move around each other from chakra to chakra in a spiral fashion up to the right and left nostrils carrying the solar and lunar forces, so do Payasvini and Shankhini move to the right and left ear, and Pusha and Gandhari to the right and left eye. They stay in the region of the spine and branch out from the center of the head (ajna chakra or third eye) to their respective sites.

Hence these six channels are related and usually function together. When the Prana is on the right side flowing through the Pingala, it is also usually in the right ear and eye in the Payasvini and Pusha channels. When it is on the left side with the breath flowing through the Ida it is usually in the left ear and eye with the Shankhini and Gandhari.

Similarly Yashasvati and Hastijihva as the right and left general channels usually flow in accord with the Pingala and Ida. I also believe these travel up and around the Sushumna like these other right and left channels and branch out from the heart chakra under the influence of Vyana Vayu.

The Saraswati or tongue channel I think also goes up near the Sushumna and branches out from the throat chakra to the tip of the tongue.

The hand and feet channels (Yashasvati and Hastijihva) move up from the base of the spine and branch our at the navel center for the feet and the heart center for the hands.

The general channel (Varuna) moves up in the vicinity of the Sushumna and branches off in the region of the heart.

The Visvodhara or navel channel moves up from the base of the spine near the Sushumna and branches out at the third or navel chakra.

The Kuhu or reproductive channel similarly moves up from the root to the sex center and branches out from there.

The Alambusha alone branches directly out of the root chakra. The other channels remain at their points near the Sushumna until they branch off.

This gives us the following picture--

The head center (top of the head)--1 channel; the Sushumna or central channel.

The third eye (center of head)--6 channels; those for the sensory apertures, nostrils, eyes and ears (Ida and Pingala, Pusha and Gandhari, Payasvini and Shankhini).

The throat chakra--1 channel; the tongue channel (Saraswati)

The heart chakra--3 channels; the channels to the hands (higher Yashasvati and Hastijihva) and the general channel (Varuna)

The navel center--3 channels; the channels to the feet (lower Yashasvati and Hastijihva) and the navel channel (Visvodhara).
The sex center--1 channel; the reproductive (Kuhu)
The root center--1 channel; the elimination (Alambusha)

The five senses thus have their respective channels. For hearing those to the right and left ear (Payasvini and Shankhini), for touch that to the skin (Varuna), for sight those to the right and left eye (Pusha and Gandhari), for taste that to the tongue (Saraswati), for smell those to the right and left nose (Pingala and Ida).

The five organs of action have their respective channels. For speech (Saraswati), for the hands and feet (Yashasvati and Hastijihva), for the reproductive organ (Kuhu) and for the anus (Alambusha). The channels of the head are mainly under Prana Vayu, though Udana also functions through the nostrils.

The nadis govern the five sense organs and five organs of action. In terms of the Pranas, the lower channels, those of the reproduction and elimination (Kuhu and Alambusha) are ruled by Apana Vayu. The navel channel (Visvodhara) is under Samana Vayu. The general channel (Varuna) and the channels to the feet and hands (Yashasvati and Hastijihva) are under Vyana Vayu. The tongue channel (Saraswati) is under Udana Vayu. The channels of the head are mainly under Prana Vayu, though Udana also functions through the nostrils.

TREATMENT OF THE FOURTEEN NADIS

For purposes of convenience we present the treatment of the Nadis here. Strictly speaking we should deal with this material after having gone through the treatment methods of Part III, so please look at it in that context. There will be no questions on the treatment of the Nadis in this section.

One way to treat the Nadis is to treat their aperture or point of exit. This can be done through massage, heat therapy (like the burning of moxa) or the application of herbs and oils.

The Sushumna can be treated by applying pressure to the point at the top of the head, by massage of the scalp or the application of herbs and oils. Brahmi oil (Gotu Kola prepared in a coconut oil base) is specific for lubricating and tonifying the Sushumna and head center.

The channels to the ear (Payasvini and Shankhini) can be stimulated by pressing the lobe of the ear or by massage of the ear. They can be tonified by oil massage to the opening of the ear. Brahmi oil also is very good here.

The channels to the eyes (Pusha and Gandhari) can be

stimulated by pressing the points around the eyes, particularly that central and above the eyes. Oils and herbs applied to the eyes are also useful. Triphala ghee is best for this. The eyes can also be balanced or stimulated by applying pressure or oils to the third eye, for example, sandalwood paste or sandalwood oil.

The channels to the nose (Pingala and Ida) can be stimulated by pressing the points immediately to the right and left of the nostrils. They can also be treated by alternative nostril breathing and by nasya therapies (mainly with calamus), as well as by aroma therapy. These two channels are of course the most important in treatment.

The channel to the tongue (Saraswati) can be treated by application of herbs and oils to the neck and throat. Calamus ghee is particularly good for that. Placing the tongue at the roof of the mouth is helpful.

The channels to the feet and hand (Yashasvati and Hastijihva) can be treated by massage of these areas, as well as by massage of the limbs generally. Applying pressure to the center of the foot or hand and to the ends of the fingers or toes is also helpful. Herbs and oils can be applied to the palms of the hands and soles of the feet.

The channel to the stomach (Visvodhara) can be treated by massage of the abdomen, as well as by applying herbs and oils to the navel (like ginger paste). The whole body channel (Varuna) can be treated by general massage and by application of herbs and oils to the skin, particularly that of the back.

The reproductive channel (Kuhu) can be treated massage of the perineum or the point above the penis, as well as by oil application to the urethra. Brahmi oil is also good here for giving control of the sexual function.

The elimination channel (Alambusha) can be treated by massage of the rectum or application of herbs and oils at this site. The Alambusha is the next most important channel after Sushumna. Here Vata is treated by medicated enemas (basti). While we can only treat the Sushumna directly through Pranayama and meditation, the Alambusha can be affected in many ways.

We see that the treatment of the fourteen channels is much like the treatment of orifices of the body. To the nine orifices of the eyes, ears, nose, mouth, urethra and anus are added the top of the head, the navel, the hands and feet and the body as a whole.

The channels can also be treated through the senses, organs of

action or systems of the body which apply to them, as well as by treating the chakras from which they branch off. It can be useful to visualize these channels and direct the flow of Prana through them via thought. We can direct the Prana to them from the Sushumna by tracing their course of development from it.

*****

FORMS OF TOUCH IN AYURVEDIC MASSAGE

Three forms of touch are recognized in Ayurvedic massage according to the qualities of the three gunas that go with them. These are sattvic, rajasic and tamasic touch.

SATTVIC TOUCH is light, mild, gentle, balancing and harmonizing. It is warm, pleasant, sweet and nourishing. It is done with love, care, sensitivity. It is for increasing sattva. It is best for the treatment of Vata but may not be strong enough to deal with deep seated blockages. Sattvic touch is enhanced by the use of medicated oils.

RAJASIC TOUCH is moderate, stimulating, penetrating, probing. It is for balancing rajas. While it goes deeper than sattvic touch, it seeks to work through rather than break up resistance. It is done with firmness, consistency but not force. It is best for Pitta. Rajasic touch is enhanced by use with light oils or smaller amounts of oil. The use of spicy essential oils can be helpful also.

TAMASIC TOUCH is deep, heavy, strong and invasive. It breaks up stagnation and accumulation. It is sharp, probing, opening and clearing. It is done with force, intensity and determination. It may create resistance, cause pain and render us inert if done in excess. It is for dissolving tamas and is best for Kapha. It is enhanced by using dry powders, brushing the skin or non-use of oil.

Even if we need to employ a tamasic touch, we should first start out with sattvic and then work into rajasic touch (though not using oils in their application).

Technically Ayurvedic massage is of two types. General body massage is called "Abhyanga". Specific oil therapy, which we have discussed under Pancha Karma is "Snehana".

These three forms of touch also relate to the three attitudes we need to have in working with patients; gentle for Vata, moderate for Pitta and strong for Kapha.

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PART II. LESSON 11

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What are the seven chakras?
2. How do they relate to the elements?
3. How do they relate to the endocrine glands?
4. How do they relate to orifices of the body?
5. Why is it important to cleanse the nadis?
6. Why can it be dangerous to try to artificially open the chakras?
7. How do the chakras differ in function when opened than when in their normal state in humanity?
8. What is the aura?
9. What are the fourteen major nadis?
10. What are the three types of touch in Ayurvedic massage?

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PART II. THE PRINCIPLES OF AYURVEDA CONTINUED, FINAL TEST

Answer all questions as per instructions on final test Part I.

Part 1.

1. What are the seven constitutional types according to the three humors?
2. How do the three humors differ in their basic frame, weight and structure?
3. How do they differ in complexion?
4. How do they differ in digestion?
5. How do they differ in elimination?

6. How do they differ in circulation?
7. How do their speech patterns differ?
8. How does the quality of their memory vary?
9. How does the quality of their mentality vary?

10. How do strong and weak types differ, say in Pitta constitution?
11. How would you evaluate the proportions of the three humors in your own constitution?
12. What are the eight difficult constitutions and the humors that relate to them?
13. Why does Ayurveda use the three gunas for determining mental and spiritual nature?
14. Why should we all strive to develop sattva?

15. How does Vata differ in sattvic, rajasic or tamasic modes?
16. How would you evaluate the proportions of the three gunas in your own nature?
17. What factors cause Vata to increase, become aggravated and decrease?
18. How do the humors relate to the stages of life?
19. How do they relate to the four seasons?

20. At what times of the day are they more likely to become aggravated?
21. How would you judge the humoral predominance of the climate where you live?
22. How would you judge the humoral predominance of your home environment?

23. How does Ojas relate to the disease process?
24. What are the six stages of disease?
25. How does Pitta develop through the six stages of disease?

26. What are the three disease pathways?
27. What are the four prognoses of disease?
28. What are some major factors that make a disease hard to treat?
29. How are the humors both sites and causes of disease?

30. What are the deficient states of the three humors?
31. What is the most characteristic factor of Vata diseases, of Pitta diseases, of Kapha diseases?
32. What is the difference between Sama and Nirama Vata?
33. Trace the movement of Kapha through the seven tissues as it damages them?
34. What are the three methods of diagnosis?

35. How does the quality of the pulse differ in the three humors?
36. Name some external or disease factors that can radically and quickly change the nature of the pulse?
37. What is the main thing that the strength of the pulse tells us?
38. How do the three humors relate to the sites of the pulse?
39. How do the organs relate to the sites of the pulse?

40. How would a typical Vata tongue appear in a Sama condition?
41. What would a thick greasy white tongue coating tell us?
42. How does the location and nature of abdominal pain tend to differ in the three humors?
43. What are the marma points?
44. How does constitutional examination differ from examination of a particular disease?

PART 2.

1. What are the three bodies?
2. What are the five sheaths?
3. What are the seven levels of the cosmos?
4. How is devotion to God used as a healing tool in Ayurveda?
5. What is the nature of the mind?

6. Why is the mind so difficult to control?
7. What are the four levels of the mind?
8. Why is failure of intelligence the main cause of disease?
9. How does intelligence differ in its outward and inward orientation?

10. What is ignorance?
11. What is the yogic method?
12. Why is self-knowledge and self-care central to Ayurveda?
13. What are the eight limbs of Yoga?
14. What is Pratyahara?

15. What is Samadhi?
16. What are the seven chakras?
17. How do they relate to the five forms of Vata?
18. How do they relate to the endocrine glands?
19. What are the three main nadis?

20. Why is it important to cleanse the nadis?
21. Why is it dangerous to try to open the lower chakras?
22. How are Ayurveda and Yoga related?
23. What are the fourteen nadis?
24. What is the difference between solar and lunar breathing?

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PART III. AYURVEDIC THERAPEUTIC METHODS

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PART III. LESSON 1

THE SCIENCE OF THE SIX TASTES AND THE SCIENCE OF THE FIVE ELEMENTS

THE SCIENCE OF THE SIX TASTES

(Read also THE YOGA OF HERBS, pgs. 23-35 first, as the material presented here is more complicated and based upon it; note also the terminology for herbal therapeutics as diuretic, diaphoretic etc. as these terms will also be used in this course and should be known; also study AYURVEDIC HEALING, ch.2, pgs. 15-20)

As Ayurvedic diagnosis of disease is according to the three biological humors, its treatment is according to the six tastes.

The six tastes are based on the actual taste of herbs when taken in the mouth and reveal an intricate dynamic of therapeutic properties. They apply not only to herbs but also to foods and minerals, and to gems, emotions etc.; to all possible therapeutic substances and actions in nature. They show the potential of energies in nature for affecting the biological humors; raising, lowering or balancing them. They shows all the healing powers inherent in the substances and forces in the natural world.

The six tastes are sweet, salty, sour, pungent, bitter and astringent.

Each is composed of two of the five elements. Sweet taste, as in sugars and starches, is composed of earth and water; salty, as in table salt or seaweed, of water and fire; sour, as in fermented food or acid fruit, of earth and fire; pungent, as in hot spices like cayenne or ginger, of fire and air; bitter, as in bitter herbs like golden seal or gentien, of air and ether; and astringent, as of herbs containing tannins, like alum or witch hazel, of earth and air.

TASTES AND THE HUMORS

Three tastes increase each of the biological humors and three decrease it, generally according to the elements that compose them.

VATA

Vata (wind) is most decreased by salty taste, then sour and sweet. All these are composed of different elements than Vata and

contain no air or ether. It is most increased by bitter taste (which is also composed of air and ether), which most resembles it, then astringent and pungent, which both contain air.

Astringent, however, increases it more immediately, bitter more long term. Pungent can help reduce it by its warming nature.

Sour taste or pungent plus sweet (warm plus moist) is best for Vata.

PITTA

Pitta (bile) is most increased by sour taste, then pungent and salty, which all contain fire. It is most decreased by bitter taste, then astringent and sweet, which have no fire.

Sour taste, as in sour fruit juices, can relieve it temporarily, by its moist and thirst-relieving properties. Salt as during the summer can also have this effect, when we sweat a lot. It is their long term accumulations that will increase it.

Bitter is the best taste for Pitta, as it decongests and cleanses the bile and blood, but sweet is also useful for its cooling and nutritive properties.

KAPHA

Kapha (phlegm) is most increased by sweet taste, then salty and sour, which all moist and contain earth. It is most decreased by pungent taste, then bitter and astringent, which are all dry and contain air.

Salty taste helps soften and decongest Kapha and may make it easier to discharge in terms of temporary action. Some sweet expectorant herbs like licorice have this effect as well. Sour taste can help reduce fat, though it increases Kapha in terms of plasma.

Pungent is the best taste for Kapha, as it has opposite properties.

HEATING AND COOLING EFFECTS (Virya)

The six tastes are classified as heating or cooling to different degrees. Hottest generally is pungent, followed by sour and then salty. Coldest is bitter, followed by astringent and then sweet.

Sometimes Ayurvedic books classify bitter herbs, like barberry or rhubarb, as heating owing to their special antibiotic properties and their ability to burn away toxins. This is more a semantic difference. They are still considered to decrease Pitta and Kapha and increase Vata.

Other variations and exceptions exist. For example, sweet and oily, as in nuts, is usually warming. Combinations of tastes may also show combinations of qualities.

HEAVY AND LIGHT PROPERTIES

The six tastes are also classified as heavy and light. Heaviest generally is sweet, followed by salty and astringent. Lightest is bitter, followed by pungent and sour.

Again, variations and exceptions exist. Yogurt, which is sour and sweet, is heavy.

MOIST AND DRY PROPERTIES

They are also classified as moist or dry. Wettest generally is sweet, followed by salty and sour. Driest is pungent, followed by bitter and astringent.

This is according to their long term effects. In terms of immediate action, sour is most thirst relieving, pungent moistens the skin by promoting sweating and sweet is also emollient and thirst relieving. Astringent dries out the mouth and skin most directly. Salty aggravates thirst, though it promotes water retention. Bitter promotes salivation, though it is internally drying.

Moist and dry properties also vary by the liquid content of a substance. Apples and plums, though both sweet differ, in that apples have less water than plums.

POST-DIGESTIVE EFFECT (Vipaka)

The six tastes can result in three long term post-digestive effect. This is different from a secondary taste or after taste which is still felt in the mouth. It refers to their long term affect upon the digestive process.

Sweet and salty have a sweet post-digestive effect. They increase saliva and alkaline secretions of the stomach and help build all body tissues.

Sour tastes has a sour post-digestive effect. It increases acid and bile secretions in the digestive process, mainly in the small intestine. It builds all body tissues but the reproductive.

Pungent, bitter and astringent have a pungent post-digestive effect. They increase gas and are involved in the last stage of digestion in the colon. They have a long term astringent or drying and contracting action on the tissues. (For this reason the pungent post-digestive effect can be better understood if we call it astringent).

Sometimes herbs have a post-digestive effect not normal for their taste. This may give them special properties.

Moreover, we have to be careful to discriminate when we are referring to a taste like sweet, as the taste, after taste or post-digestive effect of an herb, as the term is the same in all cases but the application different.

SPECIAL ACTION (Prabhava)

Beyond their basic energetics herbs have special properties that may give them a specific action. This may refer to minute chemical constituents they may have. Some may be specially anti-cough, purgative or some other action not necessarily found in their taste and energy. Other may have special action on the mind or emotions or other subtle systems of the body.

ACTIONS OF THE TASTES

Each taste has its specific therapeutic actions.

SWEET taste is building and strengthening to all body tissues. It harmonizes the mind and promotes a sense of contentment. It is demulcent (soothing to the mucus membranes), expectorant and mildly laxative. It counters burning sensation.

SALTY taste is softening, laxative, sedative. In small amounts it stimulates digestion, in moderate amounts it is purgative and in very large amounts causes vomiting. It helps soften hard tumors and decongest hard phlegm masses. It calms the nerves and relieves anxiety.

SOUR taste is stimulant, carminative (dispells gas), nourishing and thirst relieving. It awakens the mind and senses, promotes circulation and strengthens the heart, and increases all tissues but reproductive.

PUNGENT taste is stimulant, carminative, diaphoretic (promotes sweating). It improves metabolism and promotes all organic functions. It promotes heat and digestion and counters cold sensations. It improves circulation and resolves stagnant blood or blood clots. It opens the mind and senses and clears the channels, relieving nerve pain and muscle tension.

BITTER taste is alterative (blood purifying), cleansing and detoxifying. It reduces all bodily tissues and increases lightness in the mind. It is antibiotic, antiseptic and also clears and cleanses the mind and emotions. In small amounts it is a digestive stimulant. It helps digest sugar and fat.

ASTRINGENT taste stops bleeding and other excess discharges (like excess sweating or diarrhea) and promotes healing of the skin and mucus membranes. It is expectorant and diuretic. It tightens tissues and treats prolapse.

AGGRAVATION OF THE HUMORS BY THE TASTES

EXCESS

Each taste in excess causes certain damage, first of all to the humor it aggravates, then even to the humor it alleviates (if in too large amounts).

For example, too much salt will initially aggravate Kapha (water) by holding more water in the tissues, increasing edema and congestion. An excess, however, can even aggravate Vata (air), which it alleviates in normal amounts, and cause thirst, wrinkling of the skin and falling of the hair. When there is more salt in our food or water than in our tissues it will serve to draw the fluid out of our tissues. This is why salt in excess aggravates Vata and why we cannot live on sea water.

Each taste differs in its power to aggravate humors. Bitter is the most aggravating in small amounts as it is most depleting, then salty, sour, pungent, astringent and sweet.

DEFICIENCY

A lack of each taste will also aggravate humors, first those they alleviate, then if the lack is greater even those they aggravate.

For example, too little sugar will first aggravate Vata and Pitta and cause too much lightness in the body. But if the deficiency is to the point of malnutrition, it can even weaken a person with Kapha constitution.

Usually in our culture bitter taste is used too little, then pungent and astringent. This lack of bitter taste causes us to accumulate toxins internally. Hence most of us can use more of these tastes. We usually have sweet and salty in excess, often even if we are Vata types.

TASTES AND ORGANS

Too much sweet damages the spleen (pancreas) and may cause hypoglycemia or diabetes. Too much salty damages the kidneys and may cause edema, hypertension or kidney stones. Too much pungent damages, dries the lungs, and may cause dry cough or bleeding from the lungs. Too much bitter damages the heart and may cause anemia, low blood pressure or insomnia. Too much astringent damages the colon and may cause gas, distention and constipation.

But too much of any taste, as we have seen, will generally damage the body as a whole. Sweet builds toxins and increases mucus; salty causes looseness of tissues; sour causes acidity, burning sensation and bleeding; pungent causes burning sensation, dryness and tissue depletion; bitter causes cold, vertigo and emaciation; astringent causes contractions, muscle tension, blood-clotting, constipation and nerve pain.

TASTES AND EMOTIONS

The six tastes are also the flavors of our various emotions. These can affect us the same way as diet and herbs and increase the therapeutic or disease causing effects of the tastes that correspond to them.

Hot Emotions---anger, hatred, envy
Cold Emotions---fear, grief, sorrow

Sweet--------love, attachment
Salty--------greed
Sour---------envy, resentment
Pungent------enmity, hatred
Bitter-------grief, sorrow
Astringent---fear, fright

Emotions have the same effect as food or herbs of the same energetic quality. Psychological factors, generally speaking, will outweigh physical factors. Anger can damage the liver as much as alcoholism. So herbs and diet are not enough if the taste of the mind has not changed.

Our emotional body also has a taste for certain emotions and can become addicted or accustomed to them much as the physical body does to food. We must be careful therefore not to let its sense of taste become perverted either or the same disease consequences can arise.

Sweet emotions will increase Kapha and phlegm and may cause stagnation. Salty emotions will increase Kapha and make us try to hold more weight. Sour emotions may cause heartburn or hyperacidity. Pungent emotions may make us hot and hyperactive. Bitter emotions will have a depleting and reducing effect. Astringent emotions will cause constipation and muscle tension.

TASTES ACCORDING TO DEGREE OF STRENGTH

1. Bitter
2. Salty
3. Pungent
4. Sour
5. Astringent
6. Sweet

Smaller amounts of the higher tastes will counteract or nullify large amounts of the lower tastes. Sweet taste possesses a certain neutrality and can serve as a vehicle for the other tastes. Bitter overcomes all other tastes. Salty nullifies all other tastes.

THE SIX TASTES IN NATURE

We list below the places in nature where the six tastes are most commonly found.

1. SALTY TASTE

A. MINERAL SALTS

sea salt, rock salt, laxative salts, alkalis; rock salt is preferable as a digestive stimulant; laxative salts draw water from the tissues and can aggravate Vata in excess

B. SEA PRODUCTS

sea food, shell fish, ocean fish, sea weeds, sea shells: these are milder in properties, less heating and may combine other tastes, sea shells (oyster, abalone, clam) are expectorant, antacid and sedative

2. SOUR TASTE--ACIDS

A. ACID FRUIT

These are commonly refrigerant and thirst-relieving, sometimes cooling; citrus fruit, most berries (though these are subacid), sour plums, sour cherries, sour grapes, sour apples, sour pineapple, passion fruit, hawthorn berries etc.

B. ACID VEGETABLES

These are rare, mainly tomatoes (nightshade family), but spinach or chard in excess (oxalis family), like rhubarb stems can build some acidity

C. ALCOHOLIC FERMENTS

These are generally manmade, primarily with grapes, including medicinal wines (Ayurvedic Asavas and Arishtas)

D. OTHER FERMENTED FOODS

Dairy ferments like yogurt and kefir are more heavy and tonifying and increase shukra; pickled vegetables are often good for digestion but pickled cucumbers may be very heavy, particularly when combined with much salt

3. SWEET TASTE

A. SIMPLE SUGARS

Fruit sugars, milk sugar (lactose), cane and beet sugar, honey, maple sugar etc. These derive from fruit, dairy and sugar producing plants.

B. STARCHES AND CARBOHYDRATES

Starches, like from grains, are more balanced, occasionally diuretic, sometimes heating but generally neutral. Vegetable starches like potatoes are similar. Dairy (unfermented) is heavier and damper, more tonifying but more mucous forming.

C. LIPOIDS/OILS AND FATS

These are fatty oils from seeds, nuts and animal products. They are usually heating and aggravate Pitta.

4. PUNGENT TASTE
   A. ESSENTIAL OILS, AROMATICS, SPICES
      typical aromatic plants and spices like ginger, cayenne, cardamom, mint etc.
   B. ACRID, PUNGENT-BITTER ALKALOIDS/ POISONS, NARCOTICS
      In small doses these are stimulants, sedative, antispasmodic perhaps expectorant, emetic, purgative (powerfully cleansing), but in large dosages are narcotic, paralyzing and deranging to all doshas. Milder alkaloidal herbs and beverages include coffee and tea, stronger ones include ma huang, with stronger yet being toxic like aconite.

5. BITTER; Bitter principles like Berberine
   A. SIMPLE BITTERS
      like coptis, gentien, golden seal; typically bitter in their properties
   B. ASTRINGENT BITTERS (bitters and tannins)
      like uva ursi, pippsessewa, dandelion; combine some effects of pungent taste
   C. BITTER AROMATICS (bitters and aromatic oils)
      like wormwood, mugwort, tansy, rue, vetivert. Combine some effects of pungent taste; stronger action on the mind, good digestive stimulants, may be anthelmintic, occassionally warming, some toxic.

6. ASTRINGENTS--TANNINS
   A. BARKS, RESINS, SAP
      Many resins (like coniferous or myrrh-like resins) combine astringent, bitter, pungent and even sweet tastes. They are slightly warming and possess rejuvenative properties. For example, myrrh, frankincense. Most resins are astringent to aid in the healing of the plants. Most saps are astringent.
   B. ASTRINGENT HERBS AND VEGETABLES
      Beans are often astringent and sweet but may be heating; Some starches, like potatoes, may contain some secondary astringency. Some fruit is secondarily astringent, particularly when unripe. Many green herbaceous plants are astringent, like lettuce, alfalfa, comfrey leaves, dandelion, plantain. Tree leaves and grasses are generally astringent.

PLANT COMPOUNDS THAT ARE HEATING IN NATURE

MOST ALKALOIDS
ESSENTIAL OILS/ AROMATICS
LIPOIDS (fats)
RESINS
    Most of which are flammable
ACIDS
SALTS

PLANT COMPOUNDS THAT ARE COOLING IN NATURE

SUGARS AND STARCHES (mucilage)
TANNINS
BITTER PRINCIPLES
PROTEINS (nearly neutral)

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN TASTES

COUNTERACTING TASTES

Counteracting tastes tend to neutralize each other, as their properties are opposite. One can be used to treat an excess of the other.

Bitter----Sweet	Light/heavy
Pungent---Astringent	Expanding/contracting
Sour------Salty	Acid/alkaline

Bitter reduces our craving for sweet taste and helps improve digestion of sweets and fats.

Pungent promotes excess discharges like sweating, bleeding and diarrhea. Astringent reduces them; stops sweating, bleeding and diarrhea.

Sour increases acidity, while salty counters acidity and promotes alkalinity.

SYNERGISTIC COMBINATIONS

Tastes will reinforce the actions and energies they have in common.

BITTER AND ASTRINGENT for cooling, detoxifying and diuretic action, anti-Pitta

PUNGENT AND ASTRINGENT for drying and expectorant action, anti-Kapha

PUNGENT AND BITTER for detoxification and clearing action, cleansing Ama and the digestive system (mainly anti-Kapha)

PUNGENT, SOUR AND SALTY for stimulating digestion, anti-Vata

ANTAGONISTIC

Some tastes cause side-effects if used together.

SWEET AND SALTY aggravate each other, by opposite hot and cold properties.

BALANCING

Some tastes aid in relieving the side-effects of each other.

SWEET AND PUNGENT; sweet relieves heat, pungent relieves heaviness, like cloves with sugar

TASTE COMBINATIONS IN HERBS

Some herbs contain more than one taste, as below, and often can be employed therapeutically for both.

BITTER AND ASTRINGENT; fairly common in herbaceous and green plants, uva ursi, pippsesewa, dandelion, violet

BITTER AND SWEET; rare except herbs like licorice, rehmannia

PUNGENT AND BITTER; as in bitter aromatics: mugwort, wormwood, citrus peels, prickly ash

PUNGENT AND ASTRINGENT; found in some spices, good for the lymphatic system, lungs and kapha disorders, as sage, hyssop, bayberry, cinnamon

SWEET AND ASTRINGENT; common in many foods, lotus seeds, fox nuts (makhanna) potatoes, most beans, apples

SWEET, SOUR AND ASTRINGENT; common in fruit. Astringency usually is more common when unripe, particularly with berries, like hawthorn, raspberry, also aduki beans come here.

SWEET, PUNGENT AND ASTRINGENT; as in honey, cinnamon

ASTRINGENT, BITTER, PUNGENT, SWEET; as in resins, are usually slightly heating

PUNGENT AND SWEET; as in garlic, onions, cinnamon, ginger, fennel, cardamom, cloves--sweet spices

SWEET AND SALTY; as in fish

SALTY, SWEET AND ASTRINGENT; as in seaweed

SALTY AND BITTER; very rare, in some seaweeds

THE BIOCHEMICAL MODEL

Modern biochemistry has explored the chemical properties of plants. While much of this information is interesting or useful, it cannot substitute for the energetic and spiritual model of Ayurveda. It only deals with the gross and outer constituents of plants, not their effect upon the life-force. Just because we don't know the biochemical factor whereby a plant works does not mean that the plant is useless. Ayurvedic is found on an energetic and clinical model of thousands of years of experience. From its standpoint biochemistry can be overly simple and naive, not cognizant of the subtle powers of nature.

MINERALS

Minerals also possess the various six tastes but they transmit them on a more subtle and direct level than plants; not so much through the digestive system as directly to the brain and nervous system. Plants transmit their taste through the tongue and through the medium of water. Minerals work directly on the brain. As such their action is more powerful and most are toxic unless humanized properly by the right preparation.

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PANCHA BHUTA VIDYA

THE SCIENCE OF THE FIVE ELEMENTS

The conscious use of the elements for purposes of energizing health and awareness is an important aspect of the sciences of yoga and Ayurveda. This science is not as important as that of the six tastes, however. Hence we will present it here in more complete form, while the six tastes science will be applied in the following chapters on food and herbs. For this reason, the following material is a little more complex, and some of it will become more relevant later in the course. Hence we will not have so many questions about it here. It is helpful to review this section after finishing the course.

The five elements possess important therapeutic properties as well. The general rule is that the element more subtle purifies the element more gross. In this way water purifies earth, fire purifies water, air purifies fire and ether (space) purifies air. This usually applies to the external usage of elements, like water and heat therapies, but has some internal application also.

1. ORDER OF PURIFICATION

WATER PURIFIES EARTH
FIRE PURIFIES WATER
AIR PURIFIES FIRE
ETHER PURIFIES AIR

The first thing is to keep the elements pure. This includes the elements within our body and mind, within our physical and psychic spaces. This is both an individual and a collective issue. If society does not maintain such a level of purity, such cultures will not stand the test of time. If the elements are pure they function harmoniously the promote health and awareness. If they are impure they give rise to disease and disharmony.

The elements naturally tend to become impure, as it is the nature of matter to decay. The elements become impure by becoming more gross. Generally impurity in the elements causes too much of the gross elements to accumulate. This manifests physically as waste materials and socially as pollution.

WATER PURIFIES EARTH

In nature rain cleanses the earth. When the body is dirty, we clean it with water, as in a bath or a shower. In the yoga system we recommend to cleanse the surface of the body with water morning and evening.

Water also cleans the earth and waste materials from the body internally. It keeps the channels clean and clear. We recommend drinking a cup of cool, fresh water, from a natural source, preferably exposed to Sun and air (you can take the water back and forth through the air between two glasses), both right after getting up and right before going to sleep. We also recommend to sip a little such water both immediately before and immediately after eating, as well as to wash the hands and face both before and after eating, putting a little cool water on the eyes after eating.

Also useful are baths in mineral springs. The use of oils externally, like sesame or coconut, and Ayurvedic oleation therapy (snehana) fall in this domain.

Most disease begins with an accumulation of earth, or waste materials in the body. Hydrotherapy (water therapy) is hence one of the main ways of treatment in Ayurveda, including therapeutic baths. Water also serves to extract the properties of earth, as water being a medium for herbs and foods.

Where excess earth and toxins exist in the body, water therapy is indicated. Water therapy is indicated in diseases of excessive earth, the accumulation of heaviness, weight, inertia and dullness. These are mainly Ama, Kapha and Vata disorders.

FIRE PURIFIES WATER

When water is impure it is cleansed by heating it. Liquid substances are purified by boiling or bring to a boil. We recommend cooking herbs in lightly boiling water. This makes the water pure and neutral so that it can absorb better the qualities of the herbs. We also recommend warming milk, bringing it to a boiling point before drinking, as it renders it more digestible.

Also useful are sweats and sweating therapy. Through them fire is used to purify the water in our body. The use of hot and diaphoretic herbs comes in this category.

In the body we need an adequate Agni or digestive fire to purify the water of our body and its tissues. Otherwise our water stagnates, ferments and causes various diseases. Heat therapy is thus primary in Ayurveda, including methods to induce sweating, as well as spices for raising our digestive and mental fires. It is mainly indicated in Kapha disorders.

AIR PURIFIES FIRE

When fire is impure, when it is burning with smoke, we purify

it by giving it more air or by fanning it. Air purifies fire. Hence when we give oxygen to a fire it burns better. In the body we must have the adequate flow of breath to keep our digestive and mental fires pure. Otherwise they will burn low or create smoke and cause toxins and disease to accumulate. Hence Ayurveda employs Pranayama, yogic breathing exercises, as an important therapy. Other air therapies are the use of aromatic oils, fragrances and incense, as well as bitter (air) containing herbs. They are particularly helpful in Pitta and Kapha disorders.

Internally we recommend the practice of Pranayama for purifying the fire in the body. It is best done an hour or two before dawn and an hour before sleep.

Aromatic herbs like mint and cardamom, purify and energize the digestive fire. They also help, like camphor or sage, to energize the perceptual fires and render the senses more acute.

ETHER PURIFIES AIR

Air becomes impure when it is stagnant or enclosed. It becomes pure by exposure to space.

The breath also becomes impure through stagnation. If the air we are in is not open to the outside space it becomes impure. Similarly if the breath in our body is stagnant in some area of the lungs or elsewhere it causes disease.

Hence it is important that we have adequate and clear space in the body and mind. This requires keeping our orifices and channels free of blockages (usually earth and water). Above all it involves having space for our minds and senses to move and be active. Such mental and sensory treatments are particularly useful in treating Vata disorders.

These methods of purifying the elements are generally useful for everyone and should be done regularly as part of general health maintenance. We need to maintain our right connection and interchange with the five great elements of earth, water, fire, air and ether. Quite often when one element is imbalanced, so are the others.

The general rule is that the elements more subtle cleanse those more gross, particularly the adjacent element. But all elements more subtle purify those more gross. Earth is purified by water, fire, air and ether. Water is purified by fire, air and ether. Fire is purified by air and ether.

Similarly water purifies earth, fire purifies water and earth, air purifies fire, water and earth and ether purifies all the elements. The heat of fire cleanses earth as well as water. The movement of air cleanses water and earth as well as fire. That is why water is purified by exposure to air and earth is purified by the wind. Ether purifies all the elements as it gives them the space in which to release their impurities.

Water can purify itself if it is allowed to flow freely. The purity of fire also depends upon its fuel. Air also becomes impure only if rendered stagnate. Hence earth and the gross elements can block or stagnate the elements more subtle and render them impure.

It is mainly on the level of the mind that we need to purify the elements as the mind is the subtle component of our nature.

The elements also have their psychic components. Impurity of earth manifests as attachment to the body and senses, or to our property, which breeds greed. Impurity of water manifests as attachment to the emotions or to our personal relationships, which breeds desire. Impurity of fire manifests as attachment to our will or ambition, which breeds anger. Impurity of air manifests as attachment to our ideas and expectations, which breeds free. Impurity of ether manifests as attachment to our idea of reality, which breeds delusion.

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2. PROTECTIVE POWER OF THE ELEMENTS

EARTH PROTECTS US FROM WATER
WATER PROTECTS US FROM FIRE
FIRE PROTECTS US FROM AIR
AIR PROTECTS US FROM ETHER

The second thing is to protect the elements within us. This is to give each its proper sphere and boundary in which it can function unimpeded.

EARTH PROTECTS US FROM WATER

The most simple example of this is how being on dry land protects us from water as in a flood. Earth also protects us from too much water, both on the skin and along the mucus membranes.

Various astringent clays are good for facials or for improving the tone of the skin. They have a cleansing, drawing and tightening action. Some are antiseptic and are good for infected sores. Others by their tightening action are good for hemorroids, prolapse or flabby skin. Others make good gargles or toothe powders for sore throats or excess mucus in the mucus membranes. Ayurvedic toothepowders, used also for massaging the gums, use herbs along with such clays. Internally such clays are good for diarrhea and prolapse.

Earth protects us from all the elements as through it we can create a protected space, a house, in which we are not exposed to the other elements. Another example is the clothes that we wear.

WATER PROTECTS US FROM FIRE

The most obvious form of this is that when we are wet we do not burn.

Internally the taking of liquids and demulcent herbs protects us from heat and fever. The use of ice on inflammations is another example, as is using a cool bath or sponge bath to treat fever.

FIRE PROTECTS US FROM AIR

Adequate heat in the body protects us from the wind. Otherwise we chill easily, suffer from impaired circulation and digestion, and usually come down with some Vata or Kapha disorder.

Ayurvedically this is represented by the use of hot herbs to relieve cold, wind caused pain. Such are ginger, camphor, wintergreen, eucalyptus, calamus.

AIR PROTECTS US FROM ETHER

Adequate movement of air prevents us from becoming to ethereal or spaced out.

The rule is that elements more gross protect us from those more subtle, particularly the adjacent element. Actually the gross elements protect us from all elements more subtle. Earth protects us from water, fire, air and ether. Water protects us from fire, air and ether. Fire protects us from air and ether.

Water protects us from drying out by the influence of air and from spacing out from the influence of ether. Fire protects from the cold and dispersing nature of air and ether.

Such protective action is necessary when an element is in excess. Too much of a particular element will damage the others, particularly those more gross as the gross elements serve to contain the subtle elements.

The protective function of the elements applies mainly to the physical body as it is the gross component of our nature. If we expose ourselves too much to the external elements it causes disease. Yet this factor also has a psychic consideration.

Exposure to water manifests as impressionability or vulnerability to the feelings and desires of others. Exposure to fire manifests as vulnerability to the will and domination by others. Exposure to air manifests as vulnerability to stimulation and the ideas of others. Exposure to ether manifests as vulnerability to the judgements and discriminations of others, ie. their idea as to reality.

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MAKING THE ELEMENTS SACRED IN OUR LIVES

The five elements belong to matter, what is called Prakriti in the Yoga system. This is not just gross matter or solid stuff but the essence of experience, anything that can be observed as an object. As such it includes the body, senses and mind, thought, emotion and ego, which is a self-image.

Matter and its elements become sacred when they reflect the presence of the spirit or consciousness. This we observe in the natural world. They become profane or impure when they are charged with desire and outward seeking, as in the social and commercial world. Hence matter has a certain neutrality and receptivity. We can energize it either with the sacred or the profane, the knowledge or the ignorance. If we energize it with some force of desire then it holds this force and magnifies it and makes our problems more difficult. If we energize it with a force of truth or love then it holds this force and magnifies it and gives energy to our spiritual practice.

We make the elements sacred through using their sensory component. These are earth and fragrence, water and taste, fire and sight, air and touch and ether and sound.

MAKING THE EARTH SACRED

This occurs when we approach the earth with reverence, as in the attitudes of the American Indians. Chants to the earth or meditations on it as a sacred power are helpful.

We should also energize some sacred earth in our own environment. This may take the form of worship of a statue or form of the Divine, of the use of sacred stones, like crystals or Shiva lingas, or the use of gems (which we can use according to astrological and Ayurvedic purposes). We can also have some sacred earth in our house or on our altar. This we can get from some place sacred to us or it can come through the ashes of the sacred fire.

MAKING WATER SACRED

Water naturally holds certain vibrations. All religions have their holy water. This is not just superstition but the use of water to hold a sacred energy. Water holds the energy of chants and prayers. We can create our own sacred water by having water on our altar or by our meditation seat.

Such water is best if kept in a vessel made of copper, silver or gold. It is good to add some purifying herb to it. For this purpose we can add a leaf of certain purifying aromatic plants like basil, sage or mint or we can add a few drops of their essential oil, like basil or sandalwood. It is best that we drink some sacred water daily. It is particularly useful for promoting health and curing disease. We should drink some the first and last thing every day.

MAKING FIRE SACRED

Various sacred fires are used in all religions as well. The oldest religions like the Vedic are centered on the use of a sacred fire and daily chants and rituals with it. Such fires were made with cow dung and ghee, to which were given offerings like rice and sesame seeds. This were given primarily at sunrise and sunset. Such fires can be used to offer all of our thoughts, worries, fears and anxieties and to give prayers for the upliftment of humanity and the happiness of all beings.

We can also just light a ghee lamp for this purpose, or even a candle.

MAKING AIR SACRED

This is done primarily through the use of incense, which is a common practice today. Sometimes aromatic plants are burned as well like the American Indian use of sage and cedar (juniper) and the Chinese use of mugwort (moxa). These create a positive healing and sacred space.

MAKING SPACE SACRED

This requires that we establish some sacred space. In our own homes this is an altar or meditation area. In society these are temples. In nature we can find many sacred spaces and visit them. We are always energizing our space in some manner or another. Whatever we habitually do in a particular space imparts a certain vibration on it. The bedroom has one such vibration, the bathroom another, the kitchen another, the meditation room yet another. For space to be pure or sacred it must be kept clean and orderly. The simplest way to make a space sacred is to put a flower in it.

MANTRA

The main way of making things sacred is through chants or mantras. Sound is the sensory quality that belongs to the element of ether. Hence it has the capacity to purify and harmonize all the other elements.

PUJA

The ritual worship of the Hindus, called Puja, is a scientific and artistic way of making the five elements sacred. For earth fragrances are offered, like sandalwood oil. For water some sweet juice or food is offered. For fire a ghee lamp is offered. For air incense is offered. For ether flowers are offered. These are offered to a statue or picture of the deity or guru, who represents the sacred sense of self, the recognition of the Divine presence which is the way to make all things sacred.

HOMA

Homa is the Vedic fire offering. It is used for all manner of purifications and consecrations. Whatever is offered into the sacred fire is thereby made pure.

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PART III. LESSON 1

STUDY EXERCISE

Pick up the following items: the herbs licorice, dry ginger, gentian and white oak bark, also a lemon and some sea salt. These substances typify the six tastes; licorice sweet, dry ginger pungent, gentian bitter, white oak bark astringent, lemon sour and sea salt salty.

Taste each of these items carefully, taking a small amount of each in your mouth. Rinse well with water between tasting these substances.

Note how each affects you, which feel drying and which feel moistening, which seem expansive and which seem contracting, which give you a hot sensation and which a cool sensation. Note which increase salivation for you. Note which tend to stimulate your appetite. Note which may cause you to expectorate or to cry. Note which feel pleasant and which feel unpleasant, which feel heavy and which feel light, and so on.

Notice how they affect your mind, emotions and senses. Experiment with their qualities and how they affect you on different levels.

Once you have done this go back to the nature and properties of the six tastes in Ayurveda and see if this makes more sense to you.

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STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What are the six tastes?
2. How do they relate to the three humors?
3. What is their heating or cooling action (virya)?
4. What is their post-digestive effect (vipak) (see YOGA OF HERBS)?
5. Why are they all necessary in some amount?

6. How do they relate to the emotions?
7. How can they cure diseases?
8. How can they cause diseases?
9. What is their special action (prabhava)?

10. Where in nature do we find astringent taste?

11. How do pungent and bitter taste combine therapeutically?
12. What is the main rule we follow in the purification of the elements?
13. What is the order of protection among the elements?
14. Why is it important to make the elements sacred in our lives?

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PART III. LESSON 2

DIETARY THERAPY
1. PRINCIPLES

DIET BY CONSTITUTION

This information serves to supplement the section on diet in AYURVEDIC HEALING. Please explore those sections (pp. 59-85 and 100-106), including Sattvic Diet and Detoxifying diet.

Dietary therapy is mainly according to constitution, so recommendation of diet follows determination of constitution. Those of dual or triple types in constitution should modify their diet seasonally or according to which humor is most out of balance.

Diet is the most basic way to treat the physical body, which derives from food. Yet we should not overemphasize it. It is only one part of treatment. However, a pure diet is important in developing purity of mind.

It is not enough to merely give people a list of foods they should or should not eat. The appropriate dietetics should be explained as well. Those foods which mildly aggravate the humors, like carrots for Pitta, should be discriminated from those which increase them in a direct and immediate fashion, like hot peppers for Pitta. Manner of eating is also important. We will explore these factors in this lesson.

We should not just hand out a food list to our clients and let them go. They should be instructed as how to use it properly.

We should not attempt to change diets too quickly or radically. Our body as a material organism is a creature of habit and is habituated to the food we have usually taken. It will take time to adjust to a new diet.

This principle of habituation is called 'satmya' in Sanskrit, which means becoming of like nature with. It is an important principle in Ayurveda. We can become of like nature with health or disease causing factors in body or mind. Hence we must consider that we will always tend to adapt to or become accustomed to anything, that being the basic inertia or passivity of matter. Once our system is adjusted to a disharmony there may be side effects in reestablishing harmony and time for the organism to reestablish homeostasis must be allowed.

For example, people who have grown up on hot spices have thicker stomach mucosa than those who have not. We cannot start eating a lot of hot food quickly without burning our stomach lining. People used to a meat diet will find a fruit and vegetable diet to be very laxative and gas forming, as it cleans them out. Hence they may experience diarrhea and abdominal discomfort in the process. We must be aware of such side-effects in dietary therapy and warn our patients of their possibility. Getting off of a bad or junk food diet or sugar addiction may have some of the same side-effects as getting off of drugs.

Moreover, dietary therapy is slow and can take a month or more to produce positive effects. It is dealing with the basic structural component of the body itself which is a product of time. Dietary therapy requires patience and consistency.

We should not force dietary changes upon our clients but give them practical and workable suggestions. We can suggest experiments, having them drop certain foods particularly aggravating to their condition for a period of time, so that they can see for themselves their effect. Often changing of an item or two in a permanent way has better results than a radical and short term change of diet. We must remember that we learn through experience and should encourage that learning process in our clients.

Where chronic indigestion or malabsorption exists we should proceed slowly. We should begin with a simple diet of pure starches like basmati rice or kicharee and gradually add other foods to these a week at a time. Sometimes the whole digestive system has to be reeducated from ground zero, which is its capacity to digest simple starches. No spices or pure sugars may be tolerated at this point.

We should remember that just because a food is good for a person in principle does not mean they will be able to digest it if their system is too out of balance. Even food allergies may not be caused by the foods but by our weak or deranged digestion.

NATURE OF FOOD

Food is generally sweet in taste, neutral in energy and sweet in post-digestive effect. It decreases Vata and Pitta and increases Kapha. It nourishes and maintains the humors, tissues, and waste materials of the body. It is the basis and support of the body and physical existence. Its subtle portion feeds and supports the mind (hence the need for sattvic foods).

All food tends to be sweet or pleasant in taste, as sweet is the main nutritive taste, nourishing all the tissues. Yet complex

complex carbohydrates, oils and proteins are more nourishing than simple sugars.

Astringent taste is also found as a secondary taste in food, particularly in green vegetables and beans, as well as some fruit like apples more so when they are not ripe. Astringent taste provides many minerals (earth) but does not strongly build the tissues.

Sour taste is found in sour fruit, tomatoes or pickled vegetables, and sour dairy. It is also less nutritive than sweet and nourishes all the tissues but reproductive (however, sour dairy usually nourishing this as well).

Pungent taste is found more commonly in spices and spicy vegetables and does not itself provide much direct food value. It stimulates digestion but provides little nutrition of its own.

Salty taste is found rarely in food, except sea food, and is also more of condiment taste. It does, however, strengthen all the tissues in normal dosages. Too much salt will deplete all the tissues, however.

Bitter taste has very little food value and is often a sign that vegetables are too old to eat. It does serve to clear and cleanse the digestive organs and allow for digestion to occur, particularly if bitters are taken before meals.

Most food tends to be neutral in energy, neither too hot nor too cold. Anything very hot, like ginger or pepper, or very cold, like bitter herbs (golden seal, gentian), cannot have much food value. For this reason the heating or cooling effects of foods are mild. For them to manifest large quantities or long term consumption is necessary.

For this same reason, foods can be made hotter in energy by cooking them and by the addition of spices, salt, vinegar, and oils of warming nature. Foods can be made colder by taking them cold or raw (uncooked), without oils and spices.

Foods can be heavy or light, though most food tends to be heavy, as that provides bulk to the body. Food can be made lighter through the use of spices or through less consumption, or by taking them raw. Food can be made heavier by the application of oils, sauces, cheese etc.

Foods may be drying or moistening, though most tend to be moistening, as our body tissues consist mainly of water. They can be made drier by drying them or dry preparing them, like toasting, dry frying or popping them (pop corn) or by taking them with spices. They can be made moister by cooking, with the addition of liquids or oils. Salt or sugar can also serve to moisten food.

DIET AND THE MIND

We should always direct our clients towards a more sattvic diet, as this improves the mind and spiritual nature. Note the qualities of foods in the different sections below.

MORE SPECIFIC DIETARY THERAPY

We should examine the diet of our clients and see what factors in the diet may aggravate the humors. These include kinds of food eaten, quantity of food, quality of food, regularity or frequency of eating, food preparation and food combination. There may be a few simple things like cutting out ice cream or cold water that may in themselves produce a good effect in time.

Some foods, moreover, are specific to certain diseases, like rich, greasy and acidic foods causing gout.

Moreover, we can orient the diet to target certain attributes, like making the diet dry to counter dampness. This requires a more exact knowledge of the specific attributes of foods and diseases, as given below.

AYURVEDIC DIETETICS

We must consider not only what we eat but the manner in which we eat it. Major considerations are as follows.

QUANTITY OF FOOD

Food should be taken in the right quantity. In excess it will cause formation of Ama (toxins). Deficient it will cause depletion of the tissues. Right quantity depends also upon the power of the digestive fire. Usually those who need heavier foods also have weaker digestive fires. We should not prescribe for them heavy foods in large dosages until their digestive fire is adequate or unless we also give them herbs to strengthen it.

Vata people usually need more food but cannot take too much at once and hence should eat more often. Kapha people should try to eat less and avoid overeating. Pitta people fall in between.

More quantity of food is generally needed in chronic diseases or convalescence. Less is needed in acute diseases or with fever or infection. Yet in convalescence our digestive power is weak and we may have to start off with soups until its strength returns.

QUALITY OF FOOD

Food should be of the proper quality, fresh or freshly cooked, rich in the life-force (prana). Good quality food includes organic or homegrown vegetables, food picked from the wild and raw dairy.

Food poor in quality includes recooked food, burned or overcooked food, canned food, junk food, any artificially prepared food and spoiled or rancid food. Additives, preservatives and artificial coloring to food reduces its quality also. Frozen food has less quality than fresh but is better than canned. Freeze dried food is also a little depleted. Refrigeration in general preserves food value but some deterioration does occur. We should eat fresh produce as much as we can.

Animal products usually suffer a greater deterioration of their qualities than vegetable products. They decay quicker and they also tend to hold more toxic residues. For this reason they have to be specially preserved but many of the preservative means have long term residues or side effects.

This factor is much more important in modern times of artificial and fast food and is not mentioned much in the old texts. It includes that hastily prepared or prepared in a wrong or disharmonious frame of mind.

PREPARATION OF FOOD

Food should be appropriately prepared and cooked rightly, neither undercooked nor overdone. Undercooked food can cause malabsorption. Overcooked food will be depleted of the life-force. Cooking should not be at too high temperatures or with too much heavy oils.

Generally most food is better cooked as this makes it easier for the digestive fire to work on. Cooked food is more nutritive and building, being already partially digested. Uncooked it tends to be cleansing and reducing. While uncooked it contains much life-force for removing toxins, it is light and does not have enough bulk to build up the tissues.

Some food is better fresh, like most fruit. Other food, like grains or potatoes, have to be cooked to extract their food value.

Microwave cooking damages the life-force in food. Restaurant food is usually inferior to home cooked as it is more commonly over spiced, mass prepared and done with a commercial not loving orientation. Electric cooking is inferior to gas, which is inferior to wood, but this is a minor issue.

COMBINATION OF FOOD

Food should not be taken in difficult combinations. This is according to their quality like mixing food that is too hot with that which is too cold, too light with too heavy. See sections on food combination under each food type listed below.

Food that is all cooked together like curries or stews will be easier to digest than the same ingredients eaten separately. Generally Vata can tolerate the least food combinations, though it is their tendency to eat many different things at once. Pitta can tolerate the most food combinations with their good digestive fire. Kapha falls in between.

SPICING OF FOOD

Food should be pleasantly spiced but not over spiced, nor excessively salty or sour. Food that is too tasty increases rajas and aggravates the blood. Food that is not spicy enough increases tamas and causes suppression of the digestive fire.

Vata types do best with rich food and moderately strong spices

(unless they are depleted in which too many spices can have an ungrounding effect upon them). Pitta types do better with moderately rich food and light spicing. Kapha types require light food and strong spices.

RIGHT ATTITUDE IN EATING

Meals should be taken in a relaxed, calm and cheerful frame of mind, not when nervous, anxious, disturbed or impatient. Eating should not be rushed nor done in a crowded, noisy or disturbed environment, with cigarette smoke etc. Presence of mind should be maintained during eating. A relaxed and cheerful atmosphere is good. We need not be overly solemn either.

A certain amount of reverence or thankfulness with the meal is helpful as eating is a ritual of communion with the cosmic life force. An offering of food should be made to the Divine, to the life force or for the benefit of humanity or all living beings.

In the Ayurvedic tradition eating is thought to be an offering to the digestive fire, jatharagni. Before we eat we should pay homage to that fire within us. Mantras to the five pranas may be chanted for offering the prana in the food to the inner fire. These chants are Om Pranaya Swaha, Om Udanaya Swaha, Om Samanaya Swaha, Om Vyanaya Swaha, Om Apanaya Swaha.

Time should be taken properly chewing our food. It allows for easier digestion and absorption. It is sufficient when our food is turned into an homogenous mass and does not need to become tedious. We should remember that digestion begins in the mouth

RIGHT TIME FOR EATING

Food should be taken at a time in harmony with one's nature. Generally it is best to eat during the daylight hours, particularly for Kapha types. Vata types do best with food at Vata times, dawn and dusk, and more frequent eating. Pitta types need to eat most at noon, the Pitta time of the day, with three meals a day. Kapha can get by with two meals a day.

REGIMEN FOR EATING

It is best not to exercise after eating for at least one hour, except a mild walk. The same is true of any strenuous mental activity. Similarly, exercise before eating should be avoided. Sex before or after meals similarly deranges digestion. Sleep after eating can also be unwholesome. Television with or after eating can also weaken the digestive fire.

Smoking or drinking after eating is detrimental. Smoking tends to disperse and dull the digestive fire. Alcohol is better taken with the meal, wherein it can stimulate digestion in small amounts. Afterwards it causes hyperacidity. Tea or herb tea is alright. Coffee after meals can also promote ulcers, hyperacidity or indigestion.

Desserts by their heavy and sweet nature tend to suppress the digestive fire and cause fermentation and indigestion, particularly if taken cold. They are better taken before meals or by themselves.

For those with weak digestion raw food or salads should not be taken at the beginning of the meal as they will also weaken the appetite and digestive fire.

DIETARY VARIATIONS

SEASONS

Anti-Vata diet should be followed be given emphasis in the fall and early winter. Anti-Pitta diet should be followed more in the summer. Anti-Kapha diet should be followed more in the late winter and in early spring.

Individuals whose constitutions may be equal in two of the humors, what we call dual types, should vary their diet by season.

Vata-Pitta types should follow an anti-Vata diet more in the fall and winter and anti-Pitta in the spring and summer.

Vata-Kapha types should follow anti-Vata diet in the summer and fall and anti-Kapha in the winter and spring.

Pitta-Kapha types should follow an anti-Pitta diet in summer and fall and anti-Kapha in winter and spring.

CLIMATE

Diet should be adjusted to climate as per our section on the subject in Part II. of the course.

AGE AND SEX

In old age an anti-Vata diet is more appropriate. In middle age an anti-Pitta diet is better. An anti-Kapha diet should be given more special consideration in childhood, particularly when childhood diseases occur.

Men should consider more anti-Pitta diet, women anti-Kapha diet.

Such general factors, however, should enhance rather than replace the basic diet for balancing one's humor.

DIET AND AMA

Where there is Ama, the accumulation of an undigested food mass, we should first follow a spicy, light and cleansing diet to clear it out, and should avoid those foods which tend to cause it, like sugars, oils, meat and dairy. After a week or two of this we can return to the basic diet for our constitution but may have to stay a little on the light side until we are sure Ama formation does not begin.

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The following are basic diets for the humors. These are general guidelines and some difference of opinion exists on details, as food properties are not always that precise. Foods in the 'may cause difficulty' section will only aggravate the humor in excess or when it is extremely high.

In the next section of the course is a detailed list of the properties of each food and food type. This should be studied for more specific and fine tuned dietary recommendations.

GENERAL DIET FOR VATA

FRUIT----
YES (in moderation, soaked if dry)
most fruit is good: apricots, bananas, cherries, dates, figs, grapes, grapefruit, lemons, limes, mango, papaya, peaches, pears, persimmons, pineapple, plums, pomegranate, oranges, raisins, raspberries, strawberries, tangerines
NO dry fruit generally, apples (raw), melons, cranberries

VEGETABLES----
YES (cooked)
beets, bell peppers, carrots, cilantro, hot peppers, jerusalem artichokes, mustard greens, okra, onions (cooked), parsley, radish, sweet potatoes, winter squash, yams
MAY CAUSE DIFFICULTY
alfalfa sprouts, artichokes, asparagus, broccoli, brussel sprouts, cauliflower, cucumber, eggplant, green beans, peas, potatoes, spinach, squash, tomatoes, turnips, zucchini
NO too much raw vegetables generally: mushrooms, lettuce

GRAINS----
YES basmati rice, brown rice, oats, wheat
MAY CAUSE DIFFICULTY
barley, buckwheat, corn, millet, rye
NO dry grains, granola, corn chips

BEANS----
YES mung
MAY CAUSE DIFFICULTY
aduki beans, black gram, chick peas, lima beans, peanuts, tofu
NO fava beans, kidney beans, navy beans, pinto beans, lentils split peas

NUTS AND SEEDS----
YES all nuts and seeds are good except in excess particularly almonds and sesame seeds

OILS----
YES all oils are generally good, particularly sesame, almond and ghee

DAIRY PRODUCTS----
YES all dairy products are good, particularly those that are sour, buttermilk and kefir

SWEETENERS----
YES all sweeteners are alright in moderation and in the right food combinations

CONDIMENTS----
YES all condiments are good including spices, salt, pickles and vinegar

ANIMAL PRODUCTS----
All animal products are generally good for grounding Vata but are deranging to the mind; fish and eggs are better than meat in this regard, chicken better than red meat

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GENERAL DIET FOR PITTA

FRUIT----
YES sweet and astringent fruit: apples, cranberries, dates, figs, grapes, mango, melons, pears, persimmons, pineapple, plums, pomegranate, prunes
MAY CAUSE DIFFICULTY
sour fruit: apricot, bananas, cherries, lemons, limes, oranges, papaya, plums, peaches, strawberries

VEGETABLES----
YES alfalfa sprouts, asparagus, bell peppers, broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, celery, cilantro, cucumber, green beans, lettuce, mushrooms, okra, peas, potatoes, squash, turnips, zucchini
MAY CAUSE DIFFICULTY
beets, carrots, chard, eggplant, mustard greens, parsley, spinach, sweet potatoes, tomatoes
NO chilies (hot peppers), garlic, onions, pickles, radishes

GRAINS----
YES basmati rice, oats, wheat, corn, granola
MAY CAUSE DIFFICULTY
brown rice, buckwheat, millet, rye, corn chips etc.

BEANS----
YES most beans are o.k. but are rajasic, except aduki beans, mung beans, tofu which are sattvic
NO lentils

NUTS AND SEEDS----
YES coconut, sunflower seeds
MAY CAUSE DIFFICULTY
pine nuts, pumpkin seeds, soaked almonds
NO all other nuts

OILS----
YES butter, coconut, ghee, corn, sunflower, olive in moderation
NO all other oils

DAIRY PRODUCTS----
YES sweet dairy, especially milk, cream cheese, cottage cheese
MAY CAUSE DIFFICULTY
buttermilk, kefir, salty cheese, sour cream, yogurt

SWEETENERS----
all sweeteners are good except honey, jaggary and molasses in excess

CONDIMENTS----
most condiments are to be avoided including spices, salt and vinegar: exceptions, coriander, cumin, fennel, mint, turmeric and soy sauce in moderation

ANIMAL PRODUCTS----
animal products should generally be avoided except egg whites/ the white meat of chicken is among the better

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GENERAL DIET FOR KAPHA

FRUIT----
YES dry fruit, apples, cranberries, raisins, prunes
MAY CAUSE DIFFICULTY
apricots, grapefruit, lemon, lime, mango, papaya, pomegranate
NO sweet fruit: bananas, cherries, dates, figs, grapes, melons, oranges, pears, peaches, persimmons, pineapple, plums, raspberry, strawberry

VEGETABLES----
YES astringent and pungent vegetables: alfalfa sprouts, asparagus, artichokes, beans, beets, bell peppers, broccoli, brussel sprouts, cabbage, carrots, celery, chilies, cilantro, lettuce, mushrooms, mustard greens, parsley, peas, potatoes, radish, turnips

MAY CAUSE DIFFICULTY
cauliflower, cucumber, eggplant, squash, spinach, tomatoes
NO
okra, sweet potatoes

GRAINS----
YES barley, buckwheat, corn, rye
MAY CAUSE DIFFICULTY millet, rice, granola (from the sugar)
NO oats, wheat

BEANS----
all beans are generally good, particularly soybean products

NUTS AND SEEDS----
all nuts and seeds should be generally avoided, except for pumpkin and sunflower seeds

OILS----
oils should be taken only in small quantity, only corn, safflower, soy, sunflower or a little ghee

DAIRY PRODUCTS----
dairy products should be generally avoided but goat's milk or a small amount of buttermilk (unsalted); soy milk is preferable

SWEETENERS----
all sweeteners should be avoided except honey (uncooked)

CONDIMENTS----
all spices are good, particularly cayenne, black pepper, garlic and ginger but salt, vinegar and pickles should be avoided

ANIMAL PRODUCTS----
animal products should generally be avoided, particularly pork and beef/ chicken boiled eggs are o.k. in moderation

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PART III. LESSON 2

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What is the place of dietary therapy in Ayurveda?
2. What is the general nature of food?
3. When is food better taken raw?
4. Why is food generally better cooked?
5. Why is food quality important?
6. Why is food quantity important?
7. What are some of the factors of modern life that damage our diet?
8. What kind of regime do you think you should follow in eating?

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PART III. LESSON 3

DIET 2.
COMPREHENSIVE AYURVEDIC FOOD LIST

FRUIT----

ENERGETICS AND GENERAL PROPERTIES

Fruit in general is sweet, sour and sometimes astringent in taste, generally cool in energy and sweet in post-digestive effect. It generally reduces Vata and Pitta and increases Kapha but is mild in action and can help balance all three humors if not taken in excess. It does however tend to reduce Agni or weaken the digestive fire. A lot of sweet fruit juices, particularly with meals can create Ama and also aggravate Kapha.

Fruit is thirst-relieving, refrigerant, alterative and laxative. It is mildly cleansing and nurturing both and only in excess will increase Ama (toxins) in the system. It contains mainly water and ether and has more of the latter than any other food group. It builds plasma (rasa), cleanses the blood and can have a reducing affect on the other tissues in excess. It creates lightness and purity in the body.

Fruit is highly sattvic or spiritual in nature, perhaps the most so of all foods, and promotes lightness, clarity, harmony and contentment. It increases intelligence, sense of harmony and aids in meditation. However, it does not stimulate us to do mental work or study.

By its light and cooling affect fruit may have a dispersing or spacing out affect upon us. It may not be strengthening enough for those who do heavy physical work or have to take a strong role in social action or interaction. It also can overly diffuse our aura, making us more sensitive but also more psychically vulnerable, particularly when we live in a large city or have a hectic life-style. In addition it may not be heavy enough for those of high Vata (air) constitution or condition. For Kapha types it may be too cooling and may promote edema, mucus formation and fatigue.

PREPARATION

Dry fruit is better for Kapha but will aggravate Vata. Generally it will aggravate intestinal gas and distention.

Fruit juices are more likely to aggravate Kapha. They are more cooling and laxative and can aggravate Vata and reduce Agni, particularly if wrongly combined with other food.

Cooked fruit is better for Vata (and Kapha). Taken with sweet spices like cinnamon, ginger, cardamom and cloves it is yet easier to digest.

Taken with salt, fruit, particularly sour fruit, is better for Vata. This includes lemon and lime.

Sour fruit taken with sugar is better for Pitta.

COMBINATION

Fruit does not combine well with other foods because of its sweet nature. Most fruit should not be taken with meals and is often better taken alone. Sour fruit combines better, fruit like lemon, pineapple, papaya or cranberries can be easier taken with meals.

Fruit can be taken with whole grains, however, especially rice, but also wheat, but not if these are also combined with vegetables.

Sweet fruit, like bananas, are fine with milk and yogurt. However, we should note that they do not make the dairy any better combinable with other foods.

TIME

Sweet fruit is better taken during the afternoon. It is usually too heavy and cold for Kapha time (morning). Sour fruit can be alright in the morning. It can help liquify Kapha.

Seasonally, most fruit is best in its naturally ripe season, which is usually summer and early fall. In warmer or tropical climates it can be taken all year round, but even then a solely fruit diet is usually not recommended for any extended period. It should be balanced with grains or dairy. During the winter fruit is too cool and dispersing and can have a weakening affect, but some fruit which ripens in the fall and stores easily (like apples) can be good in the winter, yet generally if they are cooked.

ANTIDOTING

Most fruit or fruit juices can be balanced or antidoted with warm, sweet spices like ginger, cardamom, cloves, cinnamon, nutmeg. Cooking fruit also helps.

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LIST OF FRUIT----

APPLES

Apples are sweet, astringent and sometimes sour in taste, cool in energy and sweet in post-digestive effect. They decrease Pitta and Kapha (mildly) but in excess can increase Vata. Cooked, particularly with spices like cinnamon, or as apple sauce, however, their energy is more neutral and they are safe for Vata.

Apples are astringent, alterative, refrigerant. They are good for diarrhea or for intestinal bleeding or ulceration. Their large amounts of pectin help bind the stool and promote healing of torn or damaged mucus membranes.

Sour apples are better for Vata but in excess may aggravate Pitta.

Apple seeds are toxic and generally should not be eaten.

APRICOTS

Apricots are sweet and sour, generally cool in energy, and sweet in post-digestive effect. They decrease Vata and Pitta and increase Kapha (mildly). In excess they can aggravate Pitta.

They are thirst relieving and anti-cough good for fever and cough.

Apricot seeds are particularly good for severe or dry cough. They are also laxative and help destroy tumors, but are slightly toxic.

BANANAS

Bananas are sweet, astringent particularly when not quite ripe, cool in energy and sour in post-digestive effect. They decrease Vata and increase Kapha. While they generally decrease Pitta, in excess or in acute Pitta conditions like ulcers, they can aggravate it, by their special sour post-digestive effect. Hence they can aggravate ulcers.

Bananas are astringent, refrigerant, laxative, nutritive and tonic. They are heavier and more strengthening ~~and~~ than other fruit, contain more solids and less water. However, they can be harder to digest as well.

As a tonic food bananas are good with milk, with which they make a good, balanced whole food, or with rice and can be taken by the debilitated, those suffering from anemia (they contain iron) or by weak children, preferably with cardamom, ginger or cinnamon.

Unripe or not fully ripe they are good for diarrhea, dysentery, cough and bleeding from the lungs, and can be used on young children and infants.

CRANBERRIES

Cranberries are astringent, sweet, cool and sweet. They decrease Pitta and Kapha but increase Vata. They are diuretic, alterative and hemostatic.

Cranberry juice is good for Pitta and Pitta conditions like burning urination or urinary tract stones and infections, as well as skin rashes and toxic blood conditions. They also counter edema and aid in weight reduction. Cranberries and their juice are often prepared with large amounts of sugar, which can negate their medicinal properties.

CHERRIES

Cherries are sweet and sour, generally a little warm in energy and sweet in post-digestive effect. They decrease Vata and increase Kapha and in excess, particularly the sour kind, can increase Pitta.

Cherries are alterative (blood cleansing) and tonic to the heart and aid in building the blood as well as the plasma. Black cherries are stronger in this respect. The juice has stronger medicinal properties.

DATES

Dates are sweet, cool and sweet. They decrease Vata and Pitta and increase Kapha. Dry they aggravate Vata.

They are nutritive, tonic, aphrodisiac and more strengthening than most other fruit. They are also demulcent, laxative, refrigerant and febrifuge. They combine well with rice or grains. They are a good tonic food with almonds. As a restorative food they are good with milk or kefir. They are good for weak children, in convalescence from lung diseases, febrile diseases or for asthma. They increase semen and strengthen the reproductive system for both men and women.

Dates can be added to herbal formulas for additional tonic action.

FIGS

Figs are sweet, astringent, cool and sweet. They decrease Vata and Pitta and increase Kapha. In excess dry figs can increase Vata.

Figs are nutritive, demulcent and laxative. They help remove urinary tract or gall bladder stones and are good for the liver and kidneys. They are good for chronic cough and are a good food for increasing weight.

The white juice of fig leaves or the stem of the fruit is a good astringent for sores, wounds, burns, chapped lips, etc.

GRAPES

Grapes are sweet or sour, depending upon the kind, generally cool in energy and sweet in post-digestive effect. They reduce Vata and Pitta but will increase Kapha. In excess, sour grapes are warm and can increase Pitta.

Grapes are refrigerant, thirst-relieving, nutritive, demulcent, diuretic, hemostatic and laxative. They are good for anemia, hemorrhage, heart disease and wasting diseases. Black grapes, in particular, aid in the building of the blood. Grapes are good for difficult, burning or painful urination, for chronic bronchitis and for gout. Grape juice is good in fevers. Grapes also help counter biliousness and acidity (but should not be taken on a full stomach).

Raisins can be added to herbal formulas to increase their tonic action, particularly on the blood, and to serve as a sweetener for harmonizing the stomach. Raisins are good strengthening food for debility conditions and less likely to aggravate Kapha.

GRAPEFRUIT

Grapefruit is sour in taste, slightly warm in energy and sour in post-digestive effect. It decreases Vata, mildly increases Pitta and helps liquify and discharge Kapha. It is good in the morning for promoting the discharge of phlegm accumulated through the night.

Grapefruit is stimulant, expectorant and astringent. It aids in the digestion of sugar and fat and is good for weight reduction. It stimulates the liver and pancreas enzyme production.

JUJUBE

The jujube is a fruit commonly used in India and China. Many Chinese herbal formulas take them as Chinese dates. In Ayurveda they are sweet and astringent in taste, cooling in energy and sweet in post-digestive effect. They decrease Pitta. Eaten dried they aggravate Vata and cause wind. Cooked they usually do not aggravate Vata. They generally increase Kapha but also liquify it and aid in its discharge from the body.

They are tonic, expectorant and demulcent. They calm the heart, build the blood, counter acidity, soothe ulcers. They stop cough and vomiting. Like licorice they can be used as flavoring agents to improve the taste of herbal formulas. They can be found at most Chinese markets and are commonly sold fresh in India.

LEMON

Lemon is sour and somewhat astringent in taste, generally cool in energy and sour in post-digestive effect. It decreases Vata

(strongly) and in excess, by its acidic nature, can increase Pitta. While it has a reducing action on the deeper Kapha tissues like fat, it can increase Kapha in the plasma. Combined with salt its Vata relieving properties are enhanced.

Lemon juice is stimulant, refrigerant, thirst-relieving, expectorant and astringent. It is good for summer heat and sunstroke, particularly taken with salt. It is good for fevers where there is hot, dry skin and thirst. It also helps stop bleeding from the lungs, kidney, uterus and g.i. tract. It is good for arthritis, gout and neuralgia.

Lemon juice is a good digestive stimulant and helps counter heartburn. It is also a good gargle for sore throat, swollen or bleeding gums. With honey it is good to aid in the discharge of phlegm and the reduction of fat. It also stimulates the flow of bile and helps dissolve gall stones.Externally, lemon juice is good for insect bites and for nerve pain. It is disinfectant.

The lemon peel is a good stomachic, digestive stimulant and helps regulate liver and spleen/pancreas function. It aids in the digestion of sugar and sweets.

LIME

Lime is much like lemon in nature being sour, cool and sour in post-digestive effect. It is generally less likely to aggravate Pitta and can help counter the affect of alcohol. Lime juice is good for palpitations, is useful for malaria or intermittent fevers, and like lemon makes a good gargle.

The lime peel is also stimulant, stomachic and expectorant and aids in the flow of energy in the liver. It is used in many chutneys. Like lemon it is good for summer heat or sunstroke taken with salt.

MANGO

Mango is sweet, sour, slightly warm and sweet. It decreases Vata and increases Kapha, while decreasing Pitta (unless it is not totally ripe).

Mango is demulcent, diuretic, astringent and refrigerant. It is good for weak or nervous digestion and constipation and is one of the more invigorating of fruit and gives vitality.

The mango skin is a good astringent for diarrhea, dysentery and hemorrhoids. The unripe and more sour fruit is made into hot mango pickles and used more for promoting digestion.

MELONS

Melons are sweet, cool and sweet. They generally decrease Pitta but increase Kapha and Vata. They are refrigerant, febrifuge and diuretic.

WATERMELON is a good summer beverage and counters summer heat and sunstroke. It is also good for high fevers with thirst, vexation and irritability. It is useful in burning urination.

CANTALOUPE is milder in properties and less likely to aggravate Vata. Melons are often best eaten alone and should not be taken with or right after meals or where there is diarrhea or loose stool.

ORANGES

Oranges are generally sweet and sour, cool in energy and sweet in post-digestive effect. They decrease Vata and increase Kapha. While they generally reduce Pitta, also in excess or in acute conditions, particularly more sour oranges, will tend to increase it.

Oranges are stimulating, expectorant, refrigerant and thirst relieving. They are good for lung disorders and diabetes.

The peel is stimulant, carminative, counters cough and vomiting and harmonizes the stomach.

PAPAYA

Papaya is sweet, a little spicy, slightly warm and sweet. It decreases Vata but mildly increases Pitta and Kapha. Papaya contains natural enzymes to aid in the digestion of food and can supplement a deficiency of the gastric juices. It is one of the most strengthening of fruit, easiest to digest and easier to combine with other foods.

Papaya is demulcent, stimulant, digestive and laxative. It is good in convalescence or debility of the digestive organs. It is good for the pancreas and helps regulate sugar metabolism. The seeds are a powerful emmenagogue and can promote abortion. The milky juice of the unripe fruit contains the largest amount of enzymes and is good for anti-parasitical action.

PEACHES

Peaches are sweet and sour, generally cool in energy and sweet in post-digestive effect. They decrease Vata and increase Kapha. Normally they decrease Pitta but in large amounts or in acute Pitta conditions, they may aggravate it. For example, they can aggravate skin rashes, which are usually of a Pitta nature. The aggravating substance appears to reside largely in the skin of the fruit and so can be removed by peeling it.

Peaches are demulcent, refrigerant and laxative and good for fever and cough. Peach seeds, like apricot seeds, possess better anti-cough and laxative properties. They promote menstruation strongly and aid in healing of damaged tissues. Peach leaves also help allay nausea and vomiting.

NECTARINE is a variety of peach but without the fuzzy skin, it is less irritant and so safer for Pitta types or anyone who may have allergic skin reactions from Peaches.

PEARS

Pears are relatives of apples. They are sweet in taste and post-digestive effect and cooling in energy. They decrease Pitta and Vata and increase Kapha. They are sweeter and less astringent than their relative, the apple, some varieties are more so than others. Some Ayurvedic books list them like apples in their properties, increasing Vata and decreasing Kapha. My feeling is that they decrease Vata and increase Kapha but only to a small degree that can be easily antidoted.

Pears are demulcent, nutritive, laxative, tonic, febrifuge and anti-cough. They help liquify Kapha. They strengthen the lungs (avalambak Kapha) and are good for dry cough, particularly pear juice or syrup, and can be used to make cough syrups. They are helpful in convalescence from lung diseases, especially with spices like cardamom, cloves, ginger or cinnamon. They are also good for fevers, biliousness, hyperacidity and other such Pitta conditions.

PERSIMMONS

Persimmons are sweet, astringent, cool and sweet in post-digestive effect. They decrease Vata and Pitta but increase Kapha. Ripe they can be very heavy, sweet and hard to digest.

They are demulcent, nutritive and astringent. Unripe they are good for diarrhea and intestinal bleeding. Ripe they are good for dry cough. Not fully ripe they are more astringent and better for Kapha.

PINEAPPLE

Pineapple is sweet and sour in taste, cool in energy and sweet in post-digestive effect. It reduces Pitta and Vata and mildly increases Kapha. When too sour, however, it can sometimes aggravate Pitta.

Pineapple is refrigerant, diuretic and laxative. Pineapples contain digestive enzymes making them good digestive stimulants. Pineapple juice is particularly good for Pitta. It cleanses the liver, counters biliousness and acidity and is good for jaundice. It also helps counter the affects of alcohol.

PLUMS

Plums are sweet or sour in taste, depending upon their kind. European plums are more purely sweet. Japanese plums combine sweet and sour tastes. Their energy is generally cool and their post-digestive effect sweet. Sour plums in excess can also aggravate Pitta.

Plums are refrigerant, thirst-relieving, alterative and laxative. Prunes are the most laxative of plums and are good bulk or lubricating laxatives. Their overly sweet nature may cause gas and cramping, however. They are also good for fever and dry cough.

Umeboshi plum or the Chinese black plum (mume) is very sour and slightly warm in nature. It is thirst-relieving, stimulant to digestion, anti-parasitical and anti-cough, and useful much like vinegar or lemon.

POMEGRANATE

Pomegranate is sweet, astringent and sour, cool in energy and sweet in post-digestive effect. It generally balances all three humors, particularly the more sweet varieties, but is specific for high Pitta. In excess it can increase Vata.

Pomegranate is astringent, alterative, hemostatic and helps build the blood, in this regard being perhaps the best fruit juice. It is best taken as a juice as the individual seeds make slow eating. It cleanses the bile and blood and is good for bilious indigestion, gall stones, hyperacidity, fever, including intermittent or malarial fever. It is a good astringent for diarrhea and dysentery.

The rind of the fruit has stronger astringent properties and has anti-parasitical action, including for tapeworms.

RASPBERRIES/BLACKBERRIES

Raspberries and blackberries are usually sweet and sour in taste, astringent when unripe, cool in energy and sweet in post-digestive effect. They decrease Vata and Pitta and increase Kapha.

They are refrigerant, thirst-relieving and astringent. Unripe raspberry is a good astringent for excess urination or nocturnal emission and improves sexual vitality. Blackberries aid in the building of the blood.

Raspberry leaf is astringent and hemostatic and good for preventing miscarriage. The leaves and roots of related berries are similarly usually good astringents.

BLUEBERRIES, though botanically unrelated, are similarly a good alterative, refrigerant and astringent and help regulate sugar metabolism. Blueberry leaf is also good for diabetes, particularly in the initial stages.

STRAWBERRIES

Strawberries are sweet, a little sour, astringent when not ripe, cool in energy and sweet in post-digestive effect. They generally decrease Vata and Pitta and increase Kapha. However, they can aggravate some Pitta conditions like skin rashes from irritant substances found mainly in their skins.

They are refrigerant, thirst-relieving and alterative, much like raspberries. As they grow close to the earth, some think that their properties are less sattvic than other fruit.

Strawberry leaf is a good mild astringent and antacid beverage tea.

TANGERINES/ MANDARIN ORANGES

Tangerines and mandarin oranges are much like oranges. They are more sour in taste, however, and so more likely to aggravate Pitta in excess or in acute conditions.

Tangerines are refrigerant, thirst relieving, expectorant and stimulant. The peels are warm and promote appetite, settle the stomach, stop vomiting and cough and aid in the discharge of phlegm. The peels of the mandarin orange are much superior to the regular orange in this respect. They regulate the chi (calm Vata and harmonize samana vayu).

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VEGETABLES----

ENERGETICS AND GENERAL NATURE

Vegetables are usually pleasant and not too strong in taste, fairly even in energy and sweet in post-digestive effect. They are a more diverse group than fruit and have several important sub-categories. They are generally sattvic but less so than fruit, largely because they grow more on the ground and are a less evolved food form than fruit.

ROOT VEGETABLES are usually heavier and more nutritive in energy. They are therefore better for Vata but more likely to aggravate Kapha.

LEAFY OR GREEN VEGETABLES are usually lighter and more drying and usually better for Kapha and Pitta but more likely to aggravate Vata. They often possess blood-cleansing properties. CABBAGE FAMILY plants also fall in this category.

PUNGENT VEGETABLES like onions or chilies are better for Vata and Kapha but will aggravate Pitta by their hot nature. They are also rajasic or irritant in their properties.

NIGHTSHADES, like tomatoes or potatoes, can provoke food allergies in Vata or Pitta types, though they are otherwise not always bad for them. This property is reduced somewhat in cooking them.

DIURETIC VEGETABLES

A number of vegetables are diuretic or drying in nature and are thereby particularly good for Kapha. These include carrots, celery, lettuce, mustard greens, parsley, cilantro, watercress, asparagus, broccoli and potatoes.

NUTRITIVE VEGETABLES

Many vegetables like leafy and astringent vegetables contain important vitamins and minerals but do not contain strong building properties, as they are fairly light in nature. The same is true even more so of sprouts like alfalfa. Most nutritive in bulk food value are root vegetables. Nutritive vegetables, usually good for Vata or deficiency conditions, particularly if curried, are potatoes, sweet potatoes, carrots, jerusalem artichokes, cauliflower.

PREPARATION

Raw vegetables are better for Pitta, unless their Agni is low. Cooked are better for Vata and Kapha. Vegetable juices have more cooling nature, particularly if taken cold or from the refrigerator and are lighter and so can aggravate Vata.

Cooked vegetables with oils and spices (curries) are better for Vata. Deep fried vegetables are more likely to aggravate Pitta and Kapha.

Use of salt with vegetables is better for Vata.

Pickled vegetables are better for Vata but may aggravate Pitta and Kapha.

Canned vegetables are more tamasic in nature and more likely to aggravate all the humors.

Frozen vegetables are better than canned but lose some of their energy.

COMBINATION

As vegetables are fairly bland in taste they combine fairly well with other foods, exceptions are fruit and other simple sugars.

Most cooked light vegetables, like cabbage family plants, do well with whole grains like rice or pasta, which also helps antidote them.

TIME

Most vegetables are better in their appropriate seasons. Green, leafy vegetables are better in spring and summer. Root vegetables are better in fall and winter.

Raw vegetables are better in the late spring and summer; cooked vegetables in the winter.

ANTIDOTING

The cold nature of raw vegetables can be antidoted with spices like ginger, garlic and onions, as well as by vinegar, garlic and oil and spicy salad dressings.

The dry nature of light vegetables like cabbage family plants can be countered by cooking them with oil, butter, sour cream or cheese.

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VEGETABLE LIST----

ALFALFA SPROUTS ETC.

Alfalfa sprouts are astringent, sweet, cool and pungent in post-digestive effect. They decrease Pitta and Kapha but increase Vata. They tend to decrease Agni also.

They are alterative, astringent, diuretic. They cleanse the blood and lymphatics and help reduce fat and tumors. They are good for toxic blood conditions, such as acne, boils, skin cancer, and for such conditions arthritis, gout, obesity, edema and tumors. They are an excellent source of vitamins and minerals.

SUNFLOWER SPROUTS are similar but less likely to aggravate Vata. They have better alterative but weaker diuretic properties.

ARTICHOKE

The artichoke is sweet, astringent, cool and sweet. It decreases Kapha and Pitta but increases Vata. Taking it with butter or lemon makes it better for Vata.

Artichoke is alterative, hemostatic and diuretic. It cleanses the liver and is good for excessive menstruation.

ASPARAGUS

Asparagus is sweet, bitter, astringent, cool and sweet. It decreases Pitta and Kapha but increases Vata. It is specific for high Pitta and is a good blood-cleansing vegetable to take in the spring.

It is diuretic, alterative and is good for infectious or bleeding disorders of the urinary and reproductive systems, including venereal diseases like herpes. It is good for fever, edema (including cardiac edema), gout and arthritis.

AVOCADO

Avocado is sweet, slightly warm and sweet. It is oily, heavy and hard to digest and is better taken with spices like cayenne. It decreases Vata but mildly increases Kapha and Pitta.

It is tonic, nutritive, demulcent and emollient. It nourishes the liver, lungs and the skin and helps build the muscles and blood. It is good for a good food for emaciation or convalescence.

BEANS/ GREEN

Green beans are sweet, astringent, cooling and sweet. They decrease Pitta and Kapha but in excess can increase Vata. They are alterative, diuretic and astringent and help cleanse the liver and blood.

BEAN SPROUTS

What is sold as bean sprouts is mung bean sprouts. They are astringent, sweet, cooling and sweet in post-digestive effect. They decrease Pitta and Kapha but in excess increase Vata. They possess similar properties to the mung beans themselves.

They are alterative, antacid and febrifuge. They counter toxins, cleanse the liver and bile and are good for alcoholism and hyperacidity.

BEETS

Beets are sweet, slightly warm and sweet. They decrease Vata but can increase Kapha and Pitta in excess. Beets are alterative, demulcent, laxative and tonic. They help build the blood and also help promote menstruation. Beet juice has stronger medicinal properties but is also more likely to aggravate the humors.

Beet greens are much like their relative, spinach.

BELL PEPPER

Bell pepper is sweet, astringent, cool and sweet. It decreases Pitta and Kapha but can increase Vata. It is alterative and refrigerant.

BITTER MELON/ KARELA

Bitter melon is the best bitter vegetable and the only commonly used bitter food article. It is commonly used in India, China and throughout Asia. It is bitter in taste, cold in energy and pungent in post-digestive effect. It decreases Pitta and Kapha and increases Vata.

Bitter melon is antipyretic, alterative and antacid. It cleanses the liver, bile and blood, helps reduce weight and tumors and alleviates fever and diarrhea. It is a good food for the summer.

CABBAGE FAMILY PLANTS--

Cabbage family plants are usually astringent, sweet, cool and pungent in post-digestive effect. They are light, drying and cleansing. They decrease Pitta and Kapha but can increase Vata. They are a little rajasic in quality. Herbally, they are alterative, diuretic and astringent.

BROCCOLI

As the category generally, basically alterative, cleansing the liver and blood.

BRUSSEL SPROUTS

As the category generally, more astringent (Vatogenic).

CABBAGE/ CHINESE CABBAGE

As the category generally. Cabbage is particularly gas-forming (Vatogenic), which property is reduced when pickled (but not in the case of sour kraut). It is mainly astringent in properties.

Chinese cabbage is a little easier to digest.

CAULIFLOWER

More sweet and sattvic than the category generally, sweet in post-digestive effect, cauliflower has demulcent and nutritive properties. It combines well with dairy products.

KALE AND KOHLRABI

As the category generally, basically cleansing to the blood.

CARROTS

Carrots are sweet, pungent, slightly warm and sweet in post-digestive effect. They decrease Vata and Kapha but in excess increase Pitta. Carrot juice can aggravate Vata by its more cold nature and can be hard to digest by its very sweet nature.

Carrots are diuretic and stimulant, promote the flow of blood and help build the blood and brighten the eyes. They are good for edema, jaundice and chronic hepatitis. They are also alterative and antiseptic. Externally carrots can be made into a poultice for treating ulcerative sores.

Carrot seeds are warm, stimulant, antispasmodic and emmenagogue and have abortifacient properties.

CELERY

Celery is astringent, sweet and salty in taste, cool and pungent in post-digestive effect. It decreases Pitta and Kapha but increases Vata but is a valuable mineral supplement for all three humors.

Celery in terms of herbal therapeutics is astringent, diuretic and nervine. It cleanses the mind and emotions and improves perception. It increases the element of ether, giving more space for meditation. In this regard it is the closest vegetable to gotu kola (brahmi), the main Ayurvedic herb for the brain and a relative of celery. It also cleanses the blood and is good for urinogenital tract infections.

The seeds and root are also diuretic and help dissolve stones and are good for arthritis and gout. The seeds are hot, stimulant, emmenagogue, antispasmodic and carminative. The Indian spice Ajwan is a kind of wild celery seeds.

CHILIES/ HOT PEPPER

Hot peppers are pungent, hot and pungent. They decrease Kapha and Vata but strongly increase Pitta and Agni. They help burn up Ama. They are stimulant, diaphoretic and digestive.

They are good for colds, congestion, debility, lack of appetite and indigestion, as well as parasites but are rather rajasic in nature.

CILANTRO

Cilantro is pungent, cool and pungent. It is generally balanced but may increase Vata in excess. It is specific for high Pitta.

It is stimulant, diuretic, diaphoretic and febrifuge. It is good for skin allergies, hay fever, sore throat, hyperacidity. It cleanses the blood and bile and is good for urinary tract infections. The juice can be applied externally for skin diseases.

It antidotes hot and sour food like salsa, chilies, curries and yogurt.

CORN (FRESH)

Fresh corn is sweet, slightly warm and sweet and a very balanced food. It decreases Kapha and only in excess increases Pitta and Vata. It is nourishing and strengthening and not nearly as drying as the grain.

Corn silk is cool and diuretic and good for jaundice, hepatitis, gall stones, kidney stones, urinary tract infections, edema and other Pitta and Kapha conditions.

CUCUMBER

Cucumber is sweet, astringent, cool and sweet. It decreases Pitta but increases Vata and Kapha. It is a good summer food and is thirst-relieving, refrigerant and diuretic and are good for urinary tract infections with difficult or scanty urination.

The seeds are even better diuretics and febrifuges and also help dispel phlegm and heat from the lungs.

Cucumber is good for antidoting the heavy and sticky properties of yogurt and other heavy foods, like wheat breads or pasta.

EGGPLANT

Eggplant is sweet, astringent, cool and sweet. It generally decreases Pitta and increases Kapha and Vata. Yet as a nightshade it can aggravate some Pitta types also. Its Vata increasing properties can often be antidoted with spices like garlic and by steam cooking or frying in oil.

It is nutritive and demulcent and is one of the more substantial of vegetables in terms of its food value. It can be good in convalescence from febrile diseases.

JERUSALEM ARTICHOKE

Jerusalem artichoke is sweet, cool and sweet. It decreases Vata and Pitta and increases Kapha. It is highly tonic and rejuvenative and good for building the reproductive tissue. It is good for impotence and infertility, sexual debility, increases vigor, vitality and Ojas. It is good for emaciation and convalescence. It deserves more use than it is usually given.

LETTUCE

Lettuce is pleasant, astringent, cool and pungent in post-digestive effect. It decreases Pitta and Kapha but increases Vata. It is alterative, astringent, diuretic, calming and cleansing to the mind and emotions. It cleanses both the blood and lymphatics and relieves burning sensation. It also helps clear the mind and relieve hot emotions.

MUSHROOMS

Mushrooms are generally sweet, astringent, cool and pungent. They decrease Pitta and Kapha but increase Vata. They can also increase Ama and are tamasic in nature. They should be avoided in conditions of boils, carbuncles or infections with pus, as they tend to promote decay.

Mushrooms are diuretic, astringent and hemostatic. They are good for edema and overweight. Wild mushrooms like chanterelles and some of the Chinese and Japanese varieties have better tonic properties and are less tamasic. They have antitumor and anticancer properties, reduce cholesterol and aid in longevity.

MUSTARD GREENS

Mustard greens are pungent, bitter, warm and pungent in post-digestive effect. They decrease Kapha and Vata but increase Pitta moderately. They are stimulant and expectorant to a lesser degree though than the seeds and aid in the discharge of phlegm.

OKRA

Okra is sweet, cool and sweet. It decreases Pitta and Vata but increases Kapha. It is demulcent, emollient, diuretic, alterative and aphrodisiac.

It is good for difficult, painful or burning urination, diarrhea, dysentery, spermatorrhea and leucorrhea. It has the tonic, demulcent and diuretic properties of the other mallow plants (marshmallow, bala etc.) with which it is related and is one of the more strengthening vegetables.

ONIONS

Onions are pungent, sweet, warm and sweet. They decrease Vata and Kapha and increase Pitta. Well cooked they are less likely to aggravate Pitta. Raw they can aggravate Vata (cause gas). They are irritant, rajasic in nature, except when well cooked.

They are stimulant, diaphoretic, aphrodisiac and expectorant. They are good for colds and flus, general debility and sexual debility. Cooked in oil or ghee they can have the same strengthening properties as meat and give capacity to do strong physical work.

LEEKS are like onions but milder in properties. SHALLOTS and chives can also be treated like onions. Onion bulbs have better nutritive properties than the green onions or scallions, which can be used like spices.

PARSLEY

Parsley is pungent, astringent, slightly warm, and pungent. It is generally balanced, decreases Kapha and Vata but in excess can increase Pitta. It is one of the better greens for Vata. It is stimulant, diuretic, alterative and emmenagogue.

It is good for edema, oozing type skin rashes, delayed or difficult menstruation, gall stones and hypochondriac pain, and kidney stones. It is rich in vitamins and minerals and very cleansing to the blood and lymphatics.

PEAS/ GREEN OR SNOW

Peas are sweet, astringent, cool and sweet. They decrease Pitta and Kapha and increase Vata. Snow peas are more Vatogenic than sweet peas. Peas are alterative and astringent and good for cleansing the blood.

POTATOES

Potatoes are pleasant, astringent, cool and sweet in post-digestive effect. They are generally good for all three humors, particularly when curried. As a nightshade they can aggravate some Pitta and Vata types.

Potatoes are nutritive, among the most strengthening of vegetables, help stop diarrhea and improve absorption. They are somewhat heavy and dry and so can be difficult to digest. Vata types should take them with ghee or butter for this reason. Generally Vata types do better with potatoes steamed, Kapha types with potatoes baked. Mashed potatoes can be good for Vata.

Potatoes are tonic, diuretic and sedative (grounding) and aid in the production of breast milk in nursing women.

RADISH

Radish is pungent, astringent, warm and pungent. It decreases Kapha but increase Pitta and Vata in excess. Radish is stimulant, expectorant and anti-cough, much like its relative mustard. It aids in the digestion of heavy food.

SEAWEED

Seaweed is salty, astringent, cool and sweet. It decreases Pitta and Kapha but increases Vata in excess. Generally, it is fairly balanced. It is a good source of minerals. It strengthens the plasma (rasa). It helps relieve edema and congestion and is a good food for the thyroid. It is good for dissolving cysts and benign tumors. Generally Ayurveda does not use it because it considers its properties not to be sattvic.

SPINACH/ CHARD

Spinach is pleasant, astringent, cool and pungent in post-digestive effect. It generally decreases Kapha and increases Vata. Though its normal action is to decrease Pitta, in excess or when not adequately ripe, it can aggravate Pitta by its oxalic acids. The same is true of Swiss chard.

Spinach is alterative, refrigerant, demulcent and soothing to the mucus membranes. It is good for fever and cough, particularly dry cough with burning sensation in the lungs. It also cleanses the blood.

SQUASH--

ACORN

Acorn and other heavier forms of summer squash are sweet, cool and sweet. It decreases Vata and Pitta and increases Kapha. It is demulcent, expectorant and nutritive.

WINTER

Winter squash is sweet, cool and sweet. It decreases Pitta and Vata but increases Kapha. It is more starchy and nutritive than summer squash. It is demulcent, expectorant and good for dry cough and laryngitis.

ZUCCHINI/ YELLOW

Zucchini is sweet, cool and sweet. It decreases Pitta, mildly increases Kapha and in excess can increase Vata also. It is diuretic, alterative, refrigerant and expectorant; like cucumber but somewhat milder in properties, a good summer food and anti-heat.

SWEET POTATOES/ YAMS

Sweet potatoes are sweet, cool and sweet. They decrease Vata and increase Kapha. In excess they can increase Pitta. Though very nutritive they are heavy, hard to digest and do not combine well with other vegetables.

Yams, though unrelated botanically, are similar in properties, as they are less sweet they are easier to digest.

Both are good nourishing foods, particularly for convalescence or debility.

TOMATOES

Tomatoes are sweet, sour, warm and sour in post-digestive effect. They decrease Vata and only mildly increase Kapha. More sour, in excess or with salt or spices they aggravate Pitta. Their acidity can be countered by taking them with a little sugar. Fresh tomatoes are less acidic than commercial tomato pastes or cooked tomatoes.

Tomatoes are refrigerant, thirst-relieving, promote circulation and help build the blood. Yet they can also aggravate toxic blood conditions. They are good for the heart and can help prevent cholesterol and hypertension.

TURNIPS/RUTABAGAS

Turnips are astringent, cool and pungent in post-digestive effect, as are rutabagas. They are a little rajasic in quality. They help cleanse the blood and lymphatics and stop bleeding.

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PART III. LESSON 3

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What are the main properties of fruit?
2. Why is fruit good for the mind?
3. Why is fruit not always good for the body?
4. How do sweet and sour fruit differ in their properties?
5. What are some of the more strengthening fruit?

6. What are the general properties of vegetables?
7. What vegetables cleanse the blood?
8. What vegetables are diuretic?
9. What vegetables are more highly nutritive?
10. Name some astringent vegetables?

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PART III. LESSON 4

DIET 3.
FOOD LIST (Continued)

GRAINS/ ENERGETICS AND GENERAL NATURE

Grains are generally sweet in taste, neutral in energy and sweet in post-digestive effect. They are generally sattvic and aid in the balancing of all three humors.

Only in excess do most of them aggravate the humors, not in occasional usage. They are probably the best staple food for all climates and constitutions, particularly in their whole form. They contain significant amounts of the earth element necessary to build the tissues, which also serves to give bulk to the stool. They preserve their properties well and do not deteriorate as easily as other foods. They are easy to digest and can often be taken when other foods will upset the stomach.

DIURETIC GRAINS

Many grains have diuretic or water dispelling properties and so are both nutritive and good for Kapha. They also help discharge phlegm. These include barley, pearled barley, corn, rye, buckwheat.

NUTRITIVE GRAINS

Many grains are very strengthening and so are good for Vata conditions or for convalescence. These include wheat, oats, brown rice and barley.

PREPARATION

Steamed whole grains are very balanced and the easiest form of grains to digest.

Breads are often a little more difficult to digest. The yeast may aggravate Vata (form gas), particularly in combination with other foods. Their stickiness may aggravate Kapha. Pitta can handle them better. They are often better if toasted, which dries them out and alleviates their stickiness. They are still very good and strengthening foods, however, and are easier and quicker to take, as they do not take the time to cook like whole grains.

Pastries are yet more difficult, particularly if made with refined flour or sugar.

Unleavened breads, tortillas or chapatis are often better than yeast breads.

Pastas or noodles are a good way to take many grains, particularly wheat.

Cut or ground into meal many grains are good but do tend to lose their properties quicker and do not store as well.

With steamed vegetables, oil like ghee or sesame, grains can provide the basis for a good diet for almost anyone.

Fried in oil, particularly deep fried, like fried breads, grains are much harder to digest and more likely to aggravate Pitta, Kapha and Ama.

Dried grains, like granola, are more likely to aggravate Vata but are better for Kapha. Corn chips, etc. are difficult in this way also. Their oily content can aggravate Pitta and Kapha, as their dryness aggravates Vata. Crackers are not as bad for Vata but can also have this affect but are better for Kapha.

As grains are balanced they seldom require antidoting but spices do make them easier to digest and are particularly helpful with breads.

COMBINATION

Grains are very neutral and so can combine with many different foods like vegetables, fruit, nuts, dairy or animal products. But care must be taken as these other foods may not combine with each other. Milk and oats, for example, is alright. Or nuts and oats. But milk, nuts and oats together can cause problems.

TIME

Grains, as they hold their potency within the seed, are good any time of the year. They are especially useful in the winter.

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INDIVIDUAL GRAINS---

BARLEY

Barley is sweet or bland, a little cool and sweet in post-digestive effect. It decreases Pitta and Kapha but in excess (not in occasional usage) will tend to increase Vata.

Barley is diuretic, demulcent and anti-rheumatic. It is good for convalescence from lung diseases, for cough and arthritis. It nourishes the skin, clears edema and strengthens the kidneys. It helps improve absorption, counter diarrhea, and increases the stool and gives it better bulk.

Pearled Barley, an unrelated plant but similar in usage, has stronger medicinal properties.

CORN

Corn is sweet, basically neutral and sweet. It decreases Kapha and Pitta but in excess (not in occasional usage) can aggravate Vata.

Corn chips, however, can strongly aggravate Vata and Pitta. Blue corn is thought to be cooler in nature and better for Pitta. Corns breads are particularly drying and more likely to aggravate Vata than corn mush. Tortillas can also aggravate Vata. Posole is also very Vatogenic.

Corn is diuretic and good for edema, kidney stones, gall stones and jaundice, particularly the corn silk. Corn is very nutritive and strengthens the liver, kidneys and spleen, and aids in absorption. It has solar energy and helps increase the power of perception, particularly if taken with ghee.

MILLET

Millet is sweet, cool and sweet. It decreases Pitta and only mildly increases Kapha and Vata. It is demulcent, diuretic and nutritive and also a good food for convalescence or debility.

OATS

Oats are sweet, a little cool and sweet. They decrease Vata and Pitta and increase Kapha. They help build all the tissues, including the reproductive tissue. They help calm and strengthen the mind and nerves (particularly the oat straw). They are demulcent, emollient and laxative, particularly when cut and rolled and are good for chronic constipation. They can be a little heavy and hard to digest, particularly taken with a lot of milk and sugar.

Oats can also produce skin eruptions or aggravate toxic blood conditions because of an irritant substance it contains; so in excess it may aggravate Pitta.

RICE

Rice is sweet, generally neutral and sweet in post-digestive effect. It is relatively balanced in terms of the humors, particularly basmati rice. It is largely composed of starch, hence bland and easy to digest. It can be taken where there is vomiting, anorexia or the inability to digest food generally and will usually be accepted.

Bleached, refined white rice tends to aggravate Kapha and Ama by its sticky nature. Brown rice, particularly short grain, has more warming nature and can aggravate Pitta in excess (not normally). I think long grain brown rice is basically o.k. for Pitta but it might be wise to avoid it in acute Pitta conditions.

Brown rice is more energizing and so is better for Vata or debility. Long grain brown rice is one of the best and most balanced of all foods.

Rice is tonic, nutritive, demulcent, laxative and harmonizing for both the stomach and lungs. It builds all tissues generally through the plasma. It is good for convalescence, debility, for breaking fasts and is a good food for yoga and meditation, particularly along with a diet of fruit, dairy and sattvic spices. It is nourishing but not clogging and is highly sattvic.

With equal parts split mung it forms Kicharee, the best general staple food for health maintenance or treatment of disease.

RYE

Rye is sweet, astringent, cool and sweet. It decreases Kapha and Pitta but increases Vata. It is diuretic and one of the best grains for Kapha.

WHEAT

Wheat is sweet, a little astringent, cool and sweet in post-digestive effect. It decreases Pitta and Vata and increases Kapha. Kapha types are often allergic to it and it increases mucus and congestion.

It is very nutritive, perhaps the most strengthening of grains, promotes growth in children, helps build muscle tissue and give energy for physical work. It contains much earth in it. It also strengthens the heart, relieves palpitations and helps calm the mind and counter insomnia. It is good for ulcers, colitis and hemorrhoids. With milk and sugar it is good for bleeding disorders (rakta Pitta).

It is often best taken in the form of chapatis; wheat noodles are also good but can be very Kaphogenic. Wheat bran is a good bulk laxative and helpful particularly for Vata types. Coffee substitutes made with wheat are good nourishing beverages. Externally wheat flour is a good astringent for burns, sores and skin rashes.

Some people, however, have allergies to wheat gluten. It can aggravate arthritis, gout and other Ama conditions.

White flour is an overly refined and artificial food with tamasic properties. It causes many Kapha and Ama diseases and should not be taken if possible. It clogs the channels and dulls the mind.

*****

BEANS/ LEGUMES

ENERGETICS AND GENERAL NATURE

Beans as a whole are sweet and astringent in taste, neutral in energy and sweet in post-digestive effect. They decrease Kapha and Pitta but aggravate Vata. They contain large amounts of earth (protein) but also a fair amount of air. They are heavy and dry and therefore hard to digest.

Many beans are rajasic in nature and so cause gas and have an irritant effect upon the body, senses, emotion and mind. They are not usually recommended for the practice of yoga, except mung and tofu. They can vitiate sattva (disturb the mind).

Yet beans provide protein and so in combination with grains make for a good staple food for the diet. They also give energy for physical work. Combination of rice (long grain or basmati) with split mung beans, called Kicharee, is particularly good in this respect.

PREPARATION

Beans should be well cooked and adequately spiced and oiled. Beans prepared in lard or other heavy oils will be harder to digest and more likely to aggravate Pitta and Kapha.

TIME

Beans hold their properties well and so can be eaten all year round. They are more useful in the winter when more energy is needed to counter the cold.

COMBINATION

Beans are difficult to combine. Usually they do well with grains or vegetables. They combine poorly with sugars, fruit or dairy.

ANTIDOTING

The irritant properties of most beans, like soy or kidney beans, can be reduced by parboiling them; by boiling them and throwing away the water. This may be done more than once.

Spices are also helpful including onions, cumin and asafoetida, as well as cayenne. Salt is also useful. However, these can cause some Pitta aggravating properties in the process.

*****

LIST OF BEANS----

ADUKI BEANS

Aduki beans are sweet, astringent, slightly cool and sweet. They decrease Pitta and Kapha and increase Vata. Their nature is only slightly rajasic.

They are alterative, diuretic and tonic to the heart. They help build the blood and promote circulation. They are good for children, convalescence and for edema owing to malnutrition. They treat burning or painful urination, delayed or difficult menstruation. The paste can be combined with sugar and made into various confections (Chinese red bean paste).

BLACK GRAM

Black gram is an Indian bean. It is sweet, astringent, cool and sweet. It decreases Pitta but increases Vata. It only mildly increases Kapha. It is nutritive, demulcent, aphrodisiac and nervine tonic and the most strengthening of beans.

It is good for diarrhea, dysentery, hemorrhoids, arthritis, paralysis and liver disorders. As a tonic it increases the reproductive tissue, semen and breast milk. Externally it is a good plaster for arthritic and joint pain.

CHICK PEAS/ GARBANZOS

Chick peas are sweet, astringent, cool and sweet. They decrease Pitta but increase Vata and Kapha. They are nutritive, aphrodisiac, diuretic and astringent.

They are one of the most strengthening of beans and help increase the reproductive tissue (shukra) and are good for debility conditions. In the form of hummus they are a little easier to digest.

FAVA BEANS/ BROAD BEANS

Fava beans are sweet, astringent, cool and sweet. They decrease Pitta and Kapha but strongly increase Vata. They are not much used as a food article and some people have toxic reactions from them.

KIDNEY BEANS ETC.

Kidney beans are sweet, astringent, cool and sweet. They decrease Kapha and Pitta but increase Vata. They provide protein but are often hard to digest. Navy beans and Pinto beans are very similar.

LENTILS

Lentils are sweet, astringent, slightly warm and sweet. They decrease Kapha but can increase Pitta and Vata. They are very nutritive and strengthening but also hard to digest. Often they are easier to digest if sprouted first.

LIMA BEANS

Lima beans are also sweet, astringent, slightly cool and sweet. They decrease Kapha and Pitta but increase Vata. They are not as difficult to digest as other beans, particularly if taken fresh but still have some irritant properties.

MUNG BEANS

Mung beans are sweet, astringent, cool and sweet. They are generally balanced in terms of the humors, but are particularly good for Pitta and highly sattvic. They are the best general food for Pitta disorders and an excellent food for summer and its heat.

They are refrigerant, antipyretic, alterative and hemostatic. They are particularly good for convalescence, especially from febrile or infectious diseases. In this way they are mixed with equal parts long grain or basmati rice, which becomes Kicharee.

They are also useful food during febrile diseases, liver disorders, drug, smoking or alcohol detoxification or cancer. Tea made from mung beans is a good beverage in high fevers or heat stroke. They are also good for enlargement of liver and spleen and bleeding disorders.

The flour makes a good plaster for burns, sores, swelling or inflamed joints and helps draw out toxins. It is helpful in swollen breasts, mastitis or breast cancer.

PEANUTS

Peanuts are sweet, astringent, warm and sweet. They are an oily legume and so often used and classified as a nut. They decrease Vata and increase Pitta and Kapha. Dry roasted they increase Vata. Peanut butter is also sticky and can be hard to digest and is more likely to increase Kapha.

Peanuts, however, are a good strengthening food and source of protein. Raw peanuts can be cooked like beans and taken with honey or sugar as the Chinese do.

SOYBEANS

Soybeans are sweet, astringent, cool and sweet. They decrease Pitta and Kapha but increase Vata and are rajasic in nature. They are diuretic, diaphoretic and astringent. As a food source they are much easier to digest in the form of Tofu or soy milk.

TOFU

Tofu is sweet, astringent, cool and sweet. It is generally balanced for all three humors but is particularly good for Pitta. Vata people may sometimes have trouble digesting it.

Tofu is sattvic in nature and a good food in general for vegetarians. It can be combined with rice much like mung beans (Kicharee) as a good balanced food for most types and for most disease conditions. It is particularly good after febrile diseases. Kicharee, however, is easier to digest.

Soy milk is a good dairy substitute for Kapha or Ama conditions and is also generally balanced in terms of the humors but more likely to increase Vata. It is good for infectious conditions of the lungs and lymphatics along with fever.

SPLIT PEAS

Dry or split peas are sweet, astringent, cool and sweet. They decrease Pitta and Kapha but increase Vata. They are fairly heavy and hard to digest and are taken better in the form of soups. They are good for diarrhea and strongly bind the stool.

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NUTS AND SEEDS

ENERGETICS AND GENERAL NATURE

Most nuts are sweet in taste, slightly warm in energy and sweet in post-digestive effect. They decrease Vata but increase Kapha and Pitta.

They are heavy and oily and can be generally hard to digest. Roasting them brings out their oil. Light roasting usually renders them better for Vata. Unroasted they are often better for Pitta and Kapha but care should be taken that they do not become rancid. Dry roasted they may aggravate Vata. Blended and made into a drink (nut milks) they are often best. Nut butters are more like the oils in their property and should be used in lower dosages.

Nuts are tonic, nutritive, strengthening and rejuvenative. They are perhaps the best source of protein and fat from vegetable sources. They generally help increase fat, marrow and nerve tissue, reproductive tissue and Ojas. They also help build the blood and muscles. They strengthen memory and creativity. They are sattvic in nature and so good strengthening food for yoga and meditation.

Seeds are similar in properties but lighter, less nourishing but easier to digest. In excess they can aggravate Vata by their light nature.

PREPARATION

As above. Nuts should be chewed well. As they are difficult to digest they should not be taken in excess.

Raw nuts are usually better for Pitta but care should be taken that they do not go rancid. Overly roasted and salted nuts become particularly difficult to digest.

Nut butters are often harder to digest. Fermented nut drinks, like amasake, are easier to digest. Nut milks, grinding up the nuts with water and spices like fresh ginger, is excellent.

With a little salt they are better for Vata. With a lot of salt they are particularly aggravating to Kapha and Pitta.

With raw sugars their tonic and demulcent properties are enhanced. Hence Ayurveda uses many confections made with nuts, raisins, dates and sugar for debility and convalescence.

TIME

Nuts hold their properties fairly well. They are best taken in fall and winter. Their oily nature will aggravate Kapha more in the spring and Pitta more in the summer.

COMBINATION

Nuts do not combine well with beans or starchy vegetables (like potatoes). They do not do well with dairy, like milk or yogurt, or with most fruit. They are good with grains. Though they are o.k. with sugar, this combination does make them heavier and harder to digest.

ANTIDOTING

Nuts can be taken with mild spices like ginger or cardamom or with herbal spice teas.

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LIST OF NUTS AND SEEDS----

ALMONDS

Almonds are sweet, slightly bitter, warm and sweet. They are specific for lowering high Vata but increase Pitta and Kapha.

They are nutritive, nervine, aphrodisiac, demulcent and laxative, and good for cough, particularly dry cough. They help increase marrow and semen (majja and shukra dhatus), and strengthen the kidneys, reproductive organs and brain and are one of the best tonic foods for convalescence, debility and rejuvenation.

They are often best soaked overnight and their skins taken off in the morning (the skins are indigestible). They can be put in a blender with a little water and fresh ginger and made into a drink.

They are also useful in cooking and combine well with rice and vegetables.

Bitter almonds have better anti-cough and expectorant properties.

BRAZIL NUTS

As per nuts generally. They are particularly oily and heavy and Kaphogenic and should not be taken in channel blockage conditions.

CASHEWS

As per nuts generally. Like almonds are also good for the deeper tissues and have good expectorant properties.

They are demulcent, emollient and analgesic and good for chronic skin diseases. They are very nutritive and good for anemia, emaciation and sexual debility. Some Pitta people may have allergic reactions against them.

COCONUT

Coconut is sweet, cool and sweet. It decreases Pitta and Vata but increases Kapha. It is specific for high Pitta.

It is refrigerant, diuretic, demulcent and emollient. It nourishes the lungs and skin and is good for recovery periods from febrile and infectious diseases.

FILBERTS

As per nuts generally. They are one of the lighter nuts and hence not so aggravating to Kapha (though they still increase it).

LOTUS SEEDS

Lotus seeds are sweet, astringent, cool and sweet. They decrease Pitta but increase Kapha and Vata. They are heavy and hard to digest, can increase Ama but are highly nutritious. With sugar, ghee and spices they can be good for Vata.

They are tonic, nutritive, calmative, aphrodisiac and rejuvenative. They increase the deeper tissues including shukra and Ojas. They are good for nocturnal emission, leucorrhea, infertility and neurasthenia. They go well with such Ayurvedic tonics as ashwagandha and shatavari.

They are sold at many Chinese food markets along with foxnuts (euryale, water lily seeds), which have similar properties. A flour is made of them which can also be sometimes found.

MACADAMIA NUTS

Macadamia nuts are sweet, warm and sweet. They decrease Vata and increase Pitta and Kapha. They are highly nutritious, fairly oily, but very expensive compared to other nuts.

PECANS

Much like walnuts. They are easier to digest than walnuts however, and very nourishing.

PINYON NUTS

Pinyon nuts are sweet, slightly warm and sweet. They are extremely sattvic and are perhaps the best of all nuts. Their Pitta and Kapha aggravating properties are lower than other nuts and they are very good for Vata.

They are nutritive, tonic, demulcent and rejuvenative. They strengthen the lungs, nerves and reproductive system. They are a good for debility, wasting diseases and convalescence. They make a good flour. They are highly sattvic.

PISTACHIO

As per the other nuts. They have tonic and sedative properties. They are good for anemia, neurasthenia and help build the muscles and are often made into various strengthening confections in India and the middle east. The commercial, roasted salted types may not be very good.

PUMPKIN SEEDS

Pumpkin seeds are sweet, warm and sweet. They are relatively light and also not bad for Kapha and Pitta but in excess can aggravate Vata.

They have special anti-parasitical properties and can even treat tapeworm, if one or two ounces of the seeds are taken daily for three or five days, while fasting from other foods and taking anti-parasitical herbs. They tend to reduce shukra, however.

SESAME SEEDS

Sesame seeds are sweet, slightly warm and sweet. They decrease Vata but in excess increase Pitta and Kapha.

They are nutritive, tonic, rejuvenative. They nourish all the tissues and internal organs as well as the skin, and aid in the growth of teeth, bones and hair. They are good for all debility or convalescence.

The black kind is best for tonic properties. Sesame seeds are light and so we usually do not consume enough of them to have any major effect. They are often not much more than a spice. Generally it is better to use the oil or butter to benefit from their strong nourishing properties. Sesame seeds, particularly the white kind, tend to go rancid quickly.

SUNFLOWER SEEDS

Sunflower seeds are sweet, a little bitter, cooling and sweet. They are generally balanced for all three humors. They are good for febrile and infectious diseases and help cleanse the lungs and lymphatics. They are particularly good for Pitta and inflammatory conditions generally.

WALNUTS

Walnuts are sweet, warm and sweet. They decrease Vata but increase Pitta and Kapha.

They are nutritive, aphrodisiac, laxative and nervine. They help feed marrow and nerve tissue (majja dhatu), as well as being mildly strengthening to the reproductive system. They are a good laxative for the elderly.

The unripe fruit and husk has anti-parasitical properties. The leaves make a good wash for malignant sores and leucorrhea.

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DAIRY PRODUCTS

ENERGETICS AND GENERAL NATURE

Dairy products are basically sweet in taste, cool in energy and sweet in post-digestive effect. They decrease Pitta and Vata and increase Kapha. When sour their energy is generally warm and they also increase Pitta.

Dairy products build all the seven tissues. They particularly increase plasma, fat and reproductive tissue. In addition they are calming to the mind, nerves and emotions. Dairy products are sattvic in nature and good for the practice of yoga and meditation. Dairy products are good for emaciation, debility and convalescence, particularly from bleeding disorders, wasting diseases or sexual debility.

However, they are also damp, heavy and sticky and can increase mucus and Ama, particularly if taken cold. They are not good for Kapha conditions and can be harmful in many Ama conditions like arthritis and gout.

Since the care of cows is not what it used to be, we should be careful as to our sources for dairy products. While cows naturally secrete their milk out of love for their calves, this energy may be lacking when the animals are artificially grown and fed.

Such factors have given dairy a bad reputation among natural food enthusiasts in this country.

PREPARATION

Most dairy products are better taken warm or at room temperature. From the refrigerator their Ama promoting properties are greatly increased.

Pasteurized dairy products are a kind of recooked food and have more tamasic properties. They should be avoided if possible. Yet pasteurized milk can be turned into yogurt (though it does not always produce the best yogurt in this regard, it is still usually o.k).

Milk is better taken warm, after having boiled for a minute and then cooled down.

COMBINATION

Most dairy products do not combine well with other foods. They also do not do well with salt.

Milk is incompatible with meat, fish, yeast breads (which cause it to ferment), sour fruit (which curdle it) and nuts generally, pickles and pickled vegetables and green leafy vegetables. It combines well with whole grains and with raw sugars.

Yogurt also does not combine well with sour fruit, nuts, meat or fish.

TIME

Usually more sour dairy products like yogurt, kefir and buttermilk should not be taken so much during the summer owing to their heating nature.

Cheese should not be taken too often or during the winter and spring, wherein it can aggravate Kapha. Dairy products in general should be taken less in Kapha time and season.

ANTIDOTING

Dairy is antidoted by mucus and dampness reducing spices. These include ginger, cardamom and cinnamon for milk and mustard, cumin and cayenne for cheese and yogurt.

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LIST OF DAIRY PRODUCTS----

BUTTER

Butter is sweet, cold and sweet. It decreases Pitta and Vata but increases Kapha. It is often a vehicle for taking Pitta relieving medications. It is nourishing, strengthening and stabilizing and a good food for debility and convalescence.

It is heavy, fattening and can be clogging and increase cholesterol. It is often artificially colored. Adding of salt too it increases its heavy and clogging nature.

Externally it is good for burns and is sometimes used as vehicle for anti-Pitta type herbs.

BUTTERMILK

Buttermilk is sour, astringent, slightly warm and has a sour post-digestive effect. It decreases Vata and increases Pitta. It is less Kapha increasing than other dairy products, as it is less mucus forming but still will increase it. The commercial varieties, which contain large amounts of salt are harder to digest.

Buttermilk is astringent, digestive and diuretic. It is good for lack of appetite, indigestion, malabsorption and is useful in debility, emaciation and convalescence. It is one of the easiest foods to digest and has very strengthening proper;ties.

CHEESE

Cheese is sweet, cool and sweet. It decreases Vata and Pitta but increases Kapha and is strong to promote mucus and cause congestion. The more salted it is, the more it tends to aggravate Pitta. Cheese is very heavy in nature and can clog the channels.

Cheese is nutritive and astringent. It stops diarrhea, can cause constipation and also stops bleeding.

CREAM CHEESE is much milder in properties and easier to digest. It is more sattvic than the pungent or salty cheeses. Yet it still increases Kapha and can clog the channels. The Paneer or light cheeses of India are of the same basic nature.

COTTAGE CHEESE

Cottage cheese is sweet, cool and sweet. It decreases Pitta and Vata and increases Kapha. It is usually not too difficult to digest.

CREAM

Cream is much like milk only heavier and more rich. Hence it is more mucus forming and harder to digest. We should be careful in using it in large quantities or in combination with rich food.

GHEE/CLARIFIED BUTTER

Ghee is sweet, cool and sweet. It decreases Pitta and Vata and only mildly increases Kapha.

Ghee is tonic, emollient, rejuvenative and antacid. It is nutritive, fattening and increases marrow, semen and Ojas. It improves intelligence and increases the power of vision and also improves the voice. It strengthens the liver, kidneys and brain. It is the best form of fat for the body and the best oil for Pitta and for the liver. It helps balance all the Agnis or digestive fires of the body.

Ghee is a good cooking oil and will not burn like butter.

Spices can be prepared in it to make curries. Such strengthening spices as ginger, onion, garlic or long pepper prepared in ghee produce a strengthening and very yang food something like meat in its nutritive properties.

Ghee is also a good general tonic taken a teaspoon or two in warm milk with spices like ginger and cinnamon. As such, it is good for chronic lung disorders and wasting diseases.

Some people find the taste of ghee to be a little nauseating but can still take it on their rice or vegetables. Ghee can provoke a strong cleansing reaction in some people, as it quickly removes toxins and heat from the body, so it is often wise not to take it directly.

Externally it is nourishing to the skin and soothing to the eyes. It is good for weakness of vision, photophobia and photophobic headaches and inflammatory conditions of the eyes. A little applied in the nose nourishes the brain.

ICE CREAM

Ice cream is sweet, cold and sweet. It decreases Pitta but increases Kapha and Ama. Its cold nature can aggravate Vata also. It weakens the digestive fire, clogs the channels and promotes Ama formation. It damages the spleen and pancreas and deranges the sugar and water metabolism. It can cause hypoglycemia, diabetes or tumors, just as too much of sweet taste or dairy products generally but in a more concentrated way.

Ice bean is a little better and less congestion promoting than ice cream but still not a good food to become habituated to. Like any bean it can aggravate Vata. Frozen yogurt is a little better than ice cream but has many of the same problems being cold, heavy and sweet. Usually the less sugar in these items improves them as much as anything.

Ice cream is better in the summer and should not be taken in the winter or spring (Kapha time).

KEFIR

Kefir is sour, slightly warm and sour. It decreases Vata but increases Pitta and Kapha. It is between yogurt and buttermilk in qualities, being lighter than the former but heavier than the latter. It improves digestion and absorption and is good for low appetite and anorexia. Fruit sweetened kefir is weaker in this respect. It may contain large amounts of sugar that can cause Ama formation.

MILK

Milk is sweet, cool, sweet, heavy and nourishing and most

typical of dairy products in general. It decreases Pitta and Vata and increases Kapha. It is the main dairy product used and can usually be taken in larger quantity than the others. It is fairly damp, however, and can weaken the digestive fire.

Milk is tonic, rejuvenative, nutritive, aphrodisiac, calmative and laxative. It is particularly nourishing to the plasma and skin, but through them all tissues, particularly the reproductive. It is a good tonic to the lungs and stomach and good for bleeding from these sites. It is good for dry cough, dry throat, fever and thirst. It is a mild laxative, particularly taken warm with ghee, and will be effective for most Pitta types. It is an excellent food for young children, the elderly, debilitated or convalescing.

Milk is highly sattvic and nourishes the brain and nerves. It strengthens the mind, memory and Ojas and increases contentment, allowing for concentration and meditation. It helps promote sleep, particularly warm with nervine herbs or spices like nutmeg.

PASTEURIZATION OF MILK

Milk, however, contains the residues of inorganic fertilizers, antibiotics and other toxic substances given to the cattle or which they feed on. Hence if the milk is not raw or organic it can have many side effects.

Many people develop allergies to milk partly for this reason but also because of its heavy nature. Those who do not come from a family where milk was drunk or a culture that uses dairy may not have the enzymes to digest it properly even if it is energetically good for them. This may be true of other dairy products including butter and ghee.

GOAT'S MILK has a warm energy and is better for Kapha but may aggravate Pitta.

SOUR CREAM

Sour cream is sweet, sour, slightly warm and sour. It decreases Vata but increases Pitta and Kapha. It is stimulant and nutritive but in excess causes acidity.

YOGURT

Yogurt is sweet and sour in taste, slightly warm in energy, sweet in post-digestive effect. The more sour it is the more warm and acidic in nature. Though sour it still can nourish all seven tissues, including the reproductive, which more sour substances tend to deplete.

Yogurt is nutritive, stimulant and astringent. A small amount aids in the digestion of other foods, replenishes the positive flora in the body and can be good for diarrhea. Yogurt is heavy and

so in excess can cause constipation or clog the channels. Therefore it is better taken with spices and not taken in large quantities (normal portion is about 1/2 cup) at a time. Often it is better to mix yogurt with equal parts water and a little fresh ginger. This counters its clogging properties.

Yogurt generally promotes weight and fat, but low fat forms are less likely to have this affect. Yogurt can aggravate toxic blood conditions, like acne or skin rashes.

The whey from the yogurt is particularly nourishing and good for anorexia, weakness, emaciation or malabsorption.

*****

MEAT AND FISH

There is perhaps nothing more nourishing or strengthening than meat. It is excellent for debility or convalescence and one of the best substances for lowering high Vata. It is sweet, slightly warm and sweet in post-digestive effect. It decreases Vata and generally increases Pitta and Kapha.

Meat, however, is tamasic in nature and there is nothing as potentially deranging as it either. It breeds toxins (Ama), feeds infections, fevers and tumors. It has a dulling effect upon the mind and senses and reduces love and compassion. Its side effects have caused it to be denigrated in the Vedic teachings.

We mention meat in some detail here not so much to recommend its usage but as reference as many patients who come to us have taken it and it is good to know its long term affects.

Meat creates bad karma, the more so the more highly evolved the animal is. Red meat, that of cows particularly, gives the most negative karma. Poultry gives substantially less negative karma. Fish is less than that and shell fish, like shrimp, the least and eggs only very slightly. It is only karmically acceptable to take if it is necessary to preserve or save a human life.

Animal organs like liver can be strongly nourishing to their respective organs but also tend to produce a low quality tissue and dull the mind. Bones and bone soup can nourish the marrow but are also heavy and tend to make the blood toxic.

PREPARATION

Meat needs to be cooked properly, preferably with spices to make it easier to digest. Raw or not completely cooked it is very aggravating to Ama and the blood. Salt is helpful for softening and tenderizing it but M.S.G. has many other side effects.

Meat soups and stew are easier to take. Deep fried meats are more aggravating to the humors. Canned meats are particularly tamasic.

COMBINATION

Meat does not combine well with other foods. Mixed with milk it is particularly toxic, as the milk secreted to nourish a young animal is mixed with the flesh of one that has been slaughtered.

It does not combine well with milk, bread or potatoes, as in the standard American diet.

TIME

Meat should be avoided in the summer owing to its warm nature. In Kapha time it can also be difficult. It is also best not to eat it at night. Meat is better for those who live in high altitudes or far northern latitudes.

ANTIDOTING

The toxic effects of meat can be antidoted somewhat with raw vegetables, leafy greens and vegetable juices. Bitter herbs like aloe gel also help, as well as spices, which, however, can cause more aggravation of Pitta.

*****

LIST OF MEATS----

BEEF

Beef is sweet, slightly warm and sweet. It decreases Vata but increases Pitta and Kapha. It is highly nutritious and builds the blood and muscles. It gives strength and the capacity for work. Like red meat in general it aggravates toxic blood conditions. It strongly reduces compassion and dulls the mind. As the cow is a form of the cosmic Mother, to eat beef is a kind of sin against nature, like inflicting harm on one's own mother.

CHICKEN/ TURKEY

Chicken is sweet, slightly warm and sweet. It decreases Vata and mildly increases Kapha and Pitta. As one of the drier and leaner meats, it is less likely to aggravate Kapha. It is usually the easiest meat to digest, as it is dry, light and less oily than the others. It helps improve absorption and is good for anorexia, debility and convalescence, particularly as a soup. It is mildly aphrodisiac.

DUCK

Duck is sweet, slightly warm and sweet. It decreases Vata but increases Pitta and Kapha. It is heavier, more nutritive but harder to digest than chicken and turkey.

LAMB/MUTTON

Lamb is sweet, hot and sweet. It decreases Vata but increases Pitta and Kapha. It has aphrodisiac but irritant properties and promotes sexual activity.

It is commonly used in Islamic and middle eastern cooking, along with garlic. This is very Pittogenic and aggravates the blood. To eat a lamb is also not particularly sensitive or sattvic.

PORK

Pork is sweet, a little cool and sweet. It decreases Vata and Pitta but strongly increases Kapha. It is highly tamasic and creates dullness and heaviness in the mind and senses, and clogs the channels. Bacon is particularly heavy and difficult to digest by its high concentration of fat. Ham has less fat but is still heavy. Pork nourishes the liver and increases fat tissue more so than any of the meats.

VENISON

Venison is sweet, warm and sweet. It decreases Vata but increases Pitta and Kapha. It is very nutritive and aphrodisiac. It strengthens the kidneys and bones and promotes fertility. It is good for poor growth or retardation in children.

*****

FISH

Fish is sweet and salty in taste, slightly warm and sweet. It also decreases Vata but increases Pitta and Kapha. It is lighter than meat and not quite as dulling or as grounding to the system. Fish builds the plasma. It is tonic, rejuvenative and laxative. Yet it can cause diarrhea or nausea.

Fish contains oils that counter Vata, nourish the liver, skin and eyes, strengthen the heart and reduce cholesterol and arteriosclerosis.

PREPARATION

Care must be taken that the fish is fresh, as it spoils easily. Canned and salted it is more likely to aggravate the humors or cause Ama. It is better steamed or baked than fried.

COMBINATION

Fish can be difficult to combine. It does not do well with milk or sugars. Nor does it combine well with meat.

ANTIDOTING

Fish can be antidoted with spices like mustard, horseradish, ginger, garlic or perilla (shisho). Sour sauces tend to make it more aggravating to Pitta and the blood and may cause diarrhea.

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LIST OF FISH----

OCEAN FISH

Ocean fish is generally sweet, salty, slightly warm and sweet. It decreases Vata but increases Pitta and Kapha. It is much like fish generally.

FRESH WATER FISH

Fresh water fish is less salty and so better for Pitta and Kapha. Trout is often one of the easiest fish to digest.

SHELL FISH

Generally Ayurveda does not use shellfish because as a scavenger it is thought to be particularly tamasic in nature. Yet by this fact it also often has aphrodisiac properties

CRAB

Crab is sweet, warm and sweet. It decreases Vata but increases Pitta and Kapha. It is aphrodisiac and strengthens the kidneys and is good for impotence.

OYSTER

Oyster is regarded as an aphrodisiac and thought to increase the reproductive tissue (semen or shukra). It is particularly Kaphogenic.

SHRIMP

Shrimp is sweet, warm and sweet. It is regarded as an aphrodisiac and thought to strengthen the kidneys.

*****

ANIMAL OILS

Animal oils and fats are very hard to digest and in general increase Pitta, Kapha, Ama, cholesterol and aggravate the blood.

LARD

Lard is sweet, warm and sweet. It is extremely heavy and increases Kapha and Ama in the system and serves to clog the channels. It promotes obesity, skin diseases and gall stones. Lard is commonly used in Mexican (as in most refried beans) and Chinese cooking.

EGGS

Eggs are less tamasic than meat and fish as they do not require the killing of a live animal. By strict standards, however, they are still thought to be karmically impure.

Eggs are sweet, warm and sweet. They decrease Vata but increase Pitta and Kapha. They are tonic, nutritive, demulcent and aphrodisiac. They give vigor, promote fertility and are good for convalescence and sexual debility. Some people find them heavy and hard to digest.

The egg white has more cooling properties and is better for Pitta. The egg yolk is hotter and can aggravate toxic blood conditions.

Other animal eggs can be useful. Quail eggs are thought to be powerful aphrodisiacs and tonics.

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PART III. LESSON 4

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What are the general properties of grains?
2. Why is rice so useful as a food?
3. What are the general properties of beans?
4. What are the special properties of mung beans?
5. What are the general properties of nuts?

6. What are some of the special properties of almonds?
7. What is Kicharee?
8. What are the general properties of dairy products?
9. Why is dairy sometimes not recommended?

10. What are some of the special properties of ghee?
11. Why is milk often a very good food?
12. Why is meat generally not recommended in Ayurveda?
13. How does fish differ from meat in its properties?
14. What are the properties of eggs?
15. Why is pork often regarded as an important meat to avoid?

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PART III. LESSON 5

DIET 4.
FOOD LIST (last part)
OILS, CONDIMENTS AND SPICES

OILS

Oils are derived from nuts, seeds, beans or other oily vegetables. There are also animal fats like butter from milk, or fats from the animal tissue itself.

Oils are sweet or bland in taste, slightly warm in energy and sweet in post-digestive effect. They decrease Vata but increase Pitta and Kapha. Their heating property is increased by cooking with them, particularly frying. They are not so much a food as an adjunct to cooking or flavoring. They are necessary for maintaining our fat tissue and also for marrow and nerve tissue and allow for ease of secretions and discharges.

Oils are also useful for massage. They not only help soothe and soften the skin and muscles and dissolve toxins and congestion, they are also absorbed through the skin, and thereby serve to lubricate the lungs and large intestine and nourish the deeper tissues of the body. Such nourishment via the skin is needed by most of us and is particularly important in debility and convalescence.

Oils are used in Ayurveda for oleation therapy (snehana), which also involves taking the oils internally, as well as applying them externally. They are helpful demulcents and laxatives. The medical usages of these oils are included here.

Heavy oils should not be used in Ama conditions, congestion or toxic blood conditions. Oil massage should not be done where there are red or oozing type skin diseases or where there is severe pain on palpation. Generally we should not apply too heavy oil to the abdomen.

*****

INDIVIDUAL OILS----

ALMOND

Almond oil, like the nut, is good for Vata. Usually, however, it is more commonly used as a massage rather than a cooking oil; the same is true of its relative, apricot.

Both are good demulcent and expectorant oils for cough and wasting diseases of the lungs and kidneys. They have a soothing effect upon the skin and muscles, being good for muscle tension and pain. Almond makes a good massage oil as it is absorbed well and does not leave the skin greasy like sesame oil. Almond oil has many of the tonic usages of the nut.

AVOCADO

Avocado oil is sweet, astringent, slightly warm and sweet. It decreases Vata and increases Kapha. It does not overly increase Pitta. It strengthens the liver and nourishes the skin and is a good massage oil. It also strengthens the muscles. It goes well with salads. The flesh of the avocado has the same properties but is more generally nutritive.

CANOLA OIL

Canola is a light oil that reduces Kapha and Pitta but aggravates Vata. Its low cholesterol content makes it good for high cholesterol and obesity but it is not good for debility or dryness conditions.

CASTOR OIL

Castor oil is bitter, sweet, warming and pungent in post-digestive effect. It decreases Vata but increases Pitta and Kapha. It is an effective purgative for chronic or severe constipation and can be used on children. It is a good antispasmodic and analgesic for nervous system disorders like epilepsy and or pain conditions like arthritis.

Externally, as in castor oil packs, it promotes the healing of sores, wounds, sprains and injuries. It also draws out toxins and helps reduce tumors and swellings. It is good externally for abdominal pain, include menstrual cramps.

A teaspoon of castor oil in a cup of warm milk with a half teaspoon of dry ginger taken before sleep is a strong remedy for clearing the channels and cleansing Ama.

CORN

Corn oil has some drying properties and hence is one of the better oils for Kapha, though it still tends to increase it. It increases Vata and decreases Pitta. It can be used by Pitta types with high cholesterol who cannot use such anti-Pitta oils as coconut or other palm oils because of their high cholesterol content. Corn oil is demulcent and diuretic and good for difficult urination and nourishes the skin.

COCONUT

Coconut is sweet, cool and sweet. It decreases Pitta and Vata but increases Kapha. It is specific for Pitta. It is tonic, emollient and refrigerant.

It nourishes and softens the skin and helps counter inflammatory skin diseases, psoriasis, eczema, sunburn and burns, chapped lips. It is also good for dry cough with fever or burning sensation in the lungs. It increases the reproductive tissue and is one of the easier oils to digest. However, it can increase high cholesterol, particularly for Kapha types.

FLAXSEED/LINSEED

Linseed oil is pungent, sweet, warm and pungent in post-digestive effect. It decreases Kapha and Vata but increases Pitta. It is a good expectorant for the lungs and helps stop cough. It is also a good lubricating laxative. It serves to loosen congestion of phlegm and pull mucus out of the system.

MARGARINE

Margarine is made by combining various vegetable oils. It is better for Kapha and Pitta but may aggravate Vata. It usually only slightly increases Kapha. It depends upon the oils that compose it but it is often of a low quality.

Soy margarine is usually better and is particularly good for Kapha.

MUSTARD

Mustard oil is pungent, warm and pungent in post-digestive effect. It decreases Kapha and Vata and increases Pitta. It is specific for Kapha and is their best cooking oil.

It is stimulant, demulcent and anti-cough and helps loosen mucus from the lungs, for which purpose it can be rubbed in externally also. It is good for congestion, cold and feelings of heaviness in the joints and can be used for arthritic pain and abdominal pain.

OLIVE

Olive is sweet, neutral and sweet. It decreases Vata and Pitta and increases Kapha. It works primarily on the liver and helps soften gall stones and congested bile, and is a mild laxative. It also nourishes the skin and hair.

It is a useful massage oil like sesame but is less heavy and less sedative and so often better for general usage or usage during the day. It is commonly used in salads.

PEANUT

Peanut is sweet, slightly warm and sweet. It decreases Vata but increases Pitta and Kapha. It is a commonly used inexpensive cooking oil and often used to adulterate other oils but does not have the nutritive quality of sesame oil. It is laxative, demulcent and diuretic and is a little greasy.

SAFFLOWER

Safflower is sweet, pungent, warm and pungent. It decreases Kapha and Vata but increases Pitta. It is a lighter oil and so better for Kapha. It helps promote circulation, nourishes the heart and blood and is a good laxative and emmenagogue for difficult or delayed menstruation.

SESAME

Sesame oil is sweet, slightly warm and sweet. It decreases Vata and increases Pitta and Kapha. It is tonic, rejuvenative, sedative and laxative. It is highly nutritious and strengthens all seven tissues and all seven layers of the skin.

It strengthens the lungs, kidneys, liver and brain. It is excellent for debility, convalescence and rejuvenation. It calms the nerves, relieves muscle tension and spasms and allays pain. It helps relieve anxiety, tremors, insomnia and convulsions. It is also good for dry cough and chronic constipation and improves voice and vision. It aids in the growth of hair, nails, teeth and bones. It is good for children and the elderly. It is the most deeply penetrating of all the oils.

Sesame is the best general oil for Vata and the most nourishing of the vegetable oils. It is highly sattvic and the best oil for a yogic diet.

SOY

Soy is sweet, astringent, slightly cool and sweet. It is one of the better oils for Pitta and Kapha but may aggravate Vata. It is demulcent, diuretic and nourishes the skin.

SUNFLOWER

Sunflower is sweet, slightly cool and sweet. It is one of the better oils for Pitta and Kapha and will not aggravate Vata. It is good for cough and heat in the lungs and nourishes the skin.

It is much like coconut oil in its external usage. It is good for sunburn, burns, skin rashes, wound and sores.

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SWEETENERS/ SUGARS

We all need a certain amount of sweet taste to maintain our tissues, as the basic taste of the body is sweet. Pure sugars, however, are highly refined foods, particularly white sugar, predigested as it were and so are sometimes more directly absorbed without proper digestion. Hence they can cause allergies, immune system disorders, and enter the tissues as a form of Ama.

Generally sweet taste, and sugar in particular, decreases Pitta and Vata, while increasing Kapha. But in excess sugars can derange all the humors. Vata is particularly deranged by 'dry' sugars, as it is by dry fruit. These include cookies and other dry pastries.

Sugar is tonic, demulcent, diuretic, calmative, refrigerant, laxative, antiseptic and preservative. It is the basis of many tonic herbal preparations like confections and jellies. These usually combine raw sugars with milk, fruit or nuts and can be very good foods for debility or rejuvenation. Externally, sugars can be applied to skin sores, burns, wounds, rashes or inflamed eyes for soothing action.

Sweet taste, especially sugar, is useful mainly in the Nirama states of Pitta and Vata, wherein the digestive system is not clogged. If there is any significant tongue coating, evidence of a Sama state, they should not be taken. Honey, however, can be used in moderation in Sama conditions.

COMBINATION

Sweeteners are difficult to combine with many foods. Generally sweet and salty tastes should not be combined together. Sweet taste is digested first and so if we add a sweet dessert upon a meal we will cause the digestive process to shut down. This will cause the formation of gas and Ama.

Sugars combine well with milk for a strong, nourishing drink, particularly with additional ghee and spices like ginger or cinnamon.

ANTIDOTING

Sugars are antidoted somewhat by spices, particularly those of a spicy sweet nature, like ginger, cardamom, cloves, fennel.

Bitters also antidote sweet taste but do not combine well directly with them. These include gentian, barberry, turmeric, katuka, neem. They can be taken in capsules before or after eating sweets.

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SWEETENERS----

BROWN SUGAR

Brown sugar is much like white sugar but less deleterious in its effects. It is usually just white sugar with some of the syrup added back in.

FRUIT SUGAR

Many natural food companies are using fruit sugars in baking. These are better than white sugar but will still tend to derange the sugar metabolism, weaken digestion and promote the formation of Ama, if taken in excess. Date sugar and grape sugar are among the best.

HONEY

Honey is the best sweetener in general and is very sattvic in nature. It is sweet, astringent and pungent in taste, slightly warm in energy and sweet in post-digestive effect. It takes on some of the properties of the flowers with which it is made. For example, sage honey will have some of the nervine properties of the sage herb. It generally balances all the humors but can aggravate Pitta in excess. It is the best sweetener for Kapha.

Honey is demulcent, emollient, expectorant, laxative, nutritive and tonic. It helps discharge phlegm, dissolve fat and yet nourishes the mind, nerves and senses. It is rejuvenative, helps increase immune function and improve Ojas. Other bee products like royal jelly and propolis are even stronger in this regard.

Externally honey is a good demulcent and astringent for burns, wounds and sores. It is also soothing and healing to the eyes and can be mixed with various herbs.

Raw honey, less than six months old, is considered to be nutritive and cooling and good for Pitta and Vata, not Kapha. A little raw honey is good for children and is one of the best foods to give to babies (in small amounts). It helps build and strengthen the immune system. It is particularly good for chronic, debilitating or wasting diseases.

The medicinal properties of honey are lost by heating it and it becomes more likely to aggravate Pitta. Honey is best uncooked and unheated. Therefore, it is not good to cook or to bake with. It is still a very strong sugar and can have many of the side effects of white sugar, like deranging the sugar metabolism or increasing sugar addictions in excess.

Honey is an important vehicle (anupana) for the taking of

herbs, including pills and powders. It improves their flavor and allows them to enter into the deeper tissues more easily. It can be added to many herbal teas to improve tonic, expectorant or laxative action.

JAGGARY

This is the Indian name for the natural form of sugar that contains all the minerals and vitamins. It is the best form of sugar to take but is hard to get in this country. It can be used for all the main therapeutic indications indicated generally under sugar. In excess however it can aggravate Pitta as well as Kapha as it has a warming nature.

With milk it is a good tonic for anemia, debility or for rejuvenation. A western form of it called Sucanet is now available in the markets.

LACTOSE

Lactose is milk sugar. It has tonic properties and is often used as a medium for potentizing herbs. Powdered herbs mixed with it transfer their properties to it and have greater effect.

MALTOSE

Maltose or malt syrup is also sweet, cool and sweet. It can be made from various grains like rice (rice syrup) or barley. It is tonic, demulcent and analgesic. It is good for chronic colds or coughs, weakness of the lungs and stomach and is excellent for abdominal and intestinal spasms and colic. It is one of the best sugars and very good for children or convalescence.

MAPLE SUGAR

Maple sugar, like sugar in general, is sweet, cool and sweet. It is one of our best natural sugars and is a good nutritive and demulcent for cough, fever and burning sensation.

MOLASSES

Molasses is sweet, slightly warm and sweet. It decreases Vata but increases Pitta and Kapha. It has large amounts of iron and helps build the blood and muscles and strengthen the heart. It is very nutritive and useful in most debilitated conditions. It is a good tonic sugar for women, for pregnancy or postpartum and for many gynecological disorders.

RICE SYRUP

This is a good general sugar for Vata and Pitta.

ROCK CANDY

Rock candy is made from sugar and its energetics are the same. It is often used in Ayurveda particularly as a demulcent for cough and for counteracting burning sensation, particularly in the chest. It is often offered in pujas or rituals to the Gods and taken as prasad.

WHITE SUGAR

White sugar is an artificial or overcooked food and hence has tamasic and toxic properties. It increases Ama, aggravates the blood and feeds infections, if taken in any extensive amount. It leaches the vitamins and minerals from the body. It deranges the water metabolism, upsets sugar and fat metabolism and weakens the liver and pancreas. It weakens the immune system and makes us susceptible to many diseases. It is often addictive.

In moderation or in small amounts it can still help build the tissues. Generally it is better to avoid it and use other sugars instead but it is hard to do so as it is used so often in our culture. Pitta types can best tolerate it.

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CONDIMENTS

We use various flavoring agents in our foods, some of which are listed below. While some enhance food value others merely improve taste and may have side effects.

CAROB

Carob is sweet, astringent, slightly warm and sweet. It is fairly balanced in its action on the humors, though like any legume it can aggravate Vata. It is a good substitute for chocolate. It is nutritive and demulcent and not overly stimulating like chocolate and a good food for weakness conditions.

CHOCOLATE

Chocolate is pungent, bitter, warm and pungent. It generally decreases Vata and Kapha and increases Pitta, but in excess can increase Vata also. It is stimulant, calmative and aphrodisiac. Usually it is combined with so much sugar that it is outweighed by its properties and increases Kapha through it.

Chocolate can be useful for depression and hypotension, however, as an herbal tea. Its nature is rajasic and tamasic.

MAYONNAISE

Mayonnaise is sour, sweet, warm and sour. It decreases Vata but increases Pitta and Kapha. It can be a little heavy and hard to digest and also promotes acidity but can counter the Vata increasing properties of salads etc.

SALT

Salt is salty, warm and sweet in post-digestive effect. It decreases Vata but increases Pitta and Kapha and aggravates the blood. In excess it deranges all the humors.

A little salt on our food improves taste and increases appetite. It also helps soften are food and make it more digestible. It aids in the working of saliva and our gastric juices. In excess, however, it weakens digestion and causes nausea and can increase the heating or heavy properties of our food. It is better for light or dry food than for heavy or moist like dairy and cheese, which it aggravates.

Sea salt is better than commercial or refined salt. Rock salt is drier and lighter and a better digestive stimulant and preferable for Vata types particularly but also Pitta and Kapha. Vegetable salts are good as they contain many minerals.

Salt has many herbal usages. It is a good gargle for sore throat and helps soften and soothe the mucus membranes and draw out toxins. It also helps soften and soothe the muscles and relieve muscle tension. In large amounts we can use salt as an emetic to clear the stomach.

VINEGAR

Vinegar is sour, warm and sour. It decreases Vata but increases Pitta and Kapha (slightly). It is a good digestive and circulatory stimulant and aids in the secretion of hydrochloric acid. It promotes and eases menstruation. Natural forms of vinegar, like apple cider vinegar, are preferable to the overly refined commercial varieties. Vinegar can be used as a medium to extract the alkaloids from herbs (acetic tinctures), for example, lobelia.

Other sour condiments include lemon or lime juice, sour pickles. These function in a similar way to vinegar.

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BEVERAGES

What we drink is almost as important as what we eat. Generally we should drink three to five cups a day; more during warm or dry weather, or if we exercise, less in the winter.

Kapha types should drink less, particularly less cooling or sweet drinks. Pitta should drink more with Vata in between. Generally a half of cup of liquid to a cup is alright with meals. More than that can overly dilute our digestive juices.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

Alcohol is pungent, sweet, bitter, sour, hot in energy and sour in post-digestive effect. It decreases Vata but increases Pitta and Kapha. In excess it aggravates all three humors. It aggravates the blood and deranges the liver, pancreas and kidneys. Addiction to it is often much like addiction to sugar. It is rajasic in nature and so not recommended for yoga or meditation.

In small amounts, particularly as wine, it can be used as a digestive and circulatory stimulant. It can help relax the nerves and also help promote menstruation. Ayurveda has more specialized herbal wines for such purposes.

Alcohol is also a good medium for extracting the properties of herbs, particularly spicy or bitter herbs.

Beer is diuretic and can be useful for kidney stones but its long term action is to cause edema and overweight. Wine is the best form of alcohol for occasional, light consumption. Hard liquor is much more disruptive in its action. Sweet liqueurs are particularly deranging by the combined action of sugar and alcohol.

COFFEE

Coffee is pungent, bitter, warm and pungent in post-digestive effect. It decreases Kapha but increases Pitta and Vata. It is a nervine and cardiac stimulant and mild narcotic. It is rajasic in nature and can be addictive. In occasional usage it is good for low energy, hypotension and depression.

FRUIT JUICES

Fruit juices are very sweet in taste, cool and laxative in nature. They can have the same affect as adding sugar to our food and should not be taken where there is Ama, indigestion or gas, as they weaken the digestive fire. Therefore they are not good taken with or directly after meals, or first thing in the morning.

Sour or astringent fruit juices are usually better beverages. These include cranberry, lemon, lime, pineapple and pomegranate. Those sour are better for Vata; those astringent are better for Pitta and Kapha, like cranberry or pomegranate.

HERB TEAS

Many people now drink herb teas instead of the more traditional coffee or tea. They are much preferable to them in most instances.

Most herb teas can be divided into two major groups; those which are spicy and those which are astringent. Spicy teas, like ginger, cinnamon, cloves, cardamom, orange peel, mint, camomile, help stimulate digestion. They are good for Vata and Kapha.

Astringent teas, like alfalfa, dandelion, chicory, strawberry leaf, hibiscus, are antacid and alterative and good for Pitta and Kapha. They are best taken after meals.

See section in YOGA OF HERBS on beverage teas for the three humors.

MILK AND DAIRY

As per section. Milk is a good beverage for Vata and Pitta types, with sugar or honey in small amounts. Buttermilk is good for Vata.

MINERAL WATER

Carbonated mineral water is good for Kapha but can aggravate Pitta and Vata, as it contains air and is the product of heat. It helps oxygenate the blood and cells and promotes circulation and provides some mineral supplementation.

SOFT DRINKS

Soft drinks, whether the commercial kind like coca cola, or the natural kind, are sweet and usually taken cold. They do not combine well with other foods and tend to weaken the digestive fire. They are better in hot weather or when very thirsty. They weaken the spleen and pancreas, and derange the sugar and water metabolism, much like ice cream, and it is not good to become habituated to them.

TEA

Regular tea is bitter, sweet, astringent, cool and pungent in post-digestive effect. It decreases Pitta and Kapha but increases Vata. It is a nervine stimulant, diuretic and astringent and thought by some to be sattvic in nature. Refined forms of tea can be artificial in properties and damage the life force so high quality natural tea is better. Taken with milk and spices like ginger and cinnamon, as Indian chai tea, it is less likely to aggravate Vata.

Tea is best taken after meals owing to its astringent (digestion closing action) and helps counter hyperacidity. In excess it causes insomnia, dry mouth and thirst. It is particularly good in the summer and helps counter summer heat and dampness and exposure to the sun. It is good in hot, tropical climates. It is also useful for migraine headaches. Overly brewed it causes constipation but is thereby good to treat diarrhea.

VEGETABLE JUICES

As per section. Sour vegetable juices like tomato can aggravate Pitta and the blood. Salty juices are better for Vata, particularly as soups. Green drinks, like celery, parsley, comfrey leaf, etc. are good for detox and help reduce Pitta and Kapha but may aggravate Vata.

Carrot juice is cleansing and strengthening but can be overly sweet and weaken digestion. Wheat grass juice is highly cleansing and good for Ama, Pitta, Kapha, cleansing the blood and countering infections and tumors but can aggravate Vata. Hence it is best used with something sour, like lemon or orange, to alleviate Vata.

WATER

Fresh spring or well water is usually best form to take water in. Tap water is chlorinated and devitalized and so may cause disease and aggravate Ama conditions. Water is best taken a little cool or at room temperature for Pitta. Kapha and Vata do better with warm or hot water. Water may be a little light for Vata which may do better with milk, tonic or spice teas.

Cold water is astringent, stops sweating and bleeding, and relieves burning sensation. Warm water is stimulant, laxative, promotes sweating and relieves cold sensation. It is better for Vata but in excess can aggravate Kapha.

Cold or ice water increases Kapha and Vata and decreases Pitta. It weakens the digestive fire, causes contraction, helps clog the channels and breeds Ama.

Distilled water is devitalized, a kind of overcooked food. It depletes the Prana and is particularly deranging to Vata. It can however help drain toxins from the system.

In excess water, particularly distilled, can leach the nutrients out of our body. The basic liquid of our body has a slightly oily nature and greater density than water.

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SPICES

Spices are important for regulating appetite and strengthening Agni, the digestive fire. They help antidote the properties of food as they can counter heaviness, dispel gas and ease digestion. They have many other medical properties. They are useful in most diseases of the lungs, head or gastrointestinal tract. A few common spices often give us an herbal basis for treating the majority of diseases. Hence in the study of herbal medicine we usually begin with spices.

In general spices decrease Kapha and Vata and increase Pitta. They are pungent, warm and pungent and in properties are light, dry, warm, fragrant, subtle and clear. They are stimulant, carminative, antispasmodic, diaphoretic and expectorant. They help cleanse the channels, burn up Ama and promote mental activity.

Most commercial spices have been irradiated. Hence their prana or life-force has been largely destroyed. It is preferable to buy our spices in bulk from natural food stores.

Once powdered spices loose their properties quickly, within a few months. It is often better to use them whole and cook them in our cooking oil, like ghee.

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SPICE LIST----

ANISE

Anise is pungent, warm and pungent. It is stimulant, carminative and lactagogue. It is botanically very close to fennel and has similar usages but is more pungent and warmer.

ASAFOETIDA

Asafoetida is pungent, hot and pungent. It decreases Vata and Kapha and increases Pitta. It is stimulant, carminative, antispasmodic and anthelmintic. It is perhaps the best spice for Vata.

It is the best spice for relieving abdominal distention, pain, cramping and gas. It is good for parasites, worms and candida. It is also good for delayed or difficult menstruation, along with pain and anxiety. It is useful for mental disorders like nervousness, vertigo, anxiety and hysteria. It counters worry, depression and lethargy by its stimulant nature. It is good for cough, asthma, arthritis, headaches, nerve pain or paralysis. It promotes circulation and strengthens the heart and is good for palpitations and angina pain.

It is mainly used for antidoting beans. Some people find its taste too strong, as it is more potent than garlic. Its nature is tamasic and not recommended for yoga and meditation. Like garlic it helps ward off negative entities and is used in exorcism. It can aggravate bilious or acidic conditions in the body.

BASIL

Basil is pungent, warm and pungent. It decreases Vata and Kapha and increases Pitta moderately. It is stimulant, diaphoretic, febrifuge, nervine and carminative.

It is good for colds and flus and their associated fever, dullness and body ache, particularly with honey. It can help lower almost any kind of fever. It cleanses the colon and eases menstruation. It clears the head and sinuses, promotes perception and increases devotion and is highly sattvic. The tulsi or holy basil from India is strongest in this respect.

It is often used in Italian cooking to counter the heaviness of pasta and cheese.

BAY LEAVES

Bay leaves are pungent, warm and pungent, and very aroma¡tic. They decrease Kapha and Vata but slightly increase Pitta. They are stimulant, carminative and analgesic, and very cleansing much like cardamom in their effect. They are good for headaches, help clear the channels, and relieve cough and congestion. They are also good for diarrhea and hemorrhoids. They aid in the digestion of cheese, dairy, meat and other damp and sticky food.

BLACK PEPPER

Black pepper is pungent, hot and pungent. It decreases Kapha and Vata but increases Pitta, and is very good for burning up Ama. It is stimulant, carminative, decongestant and expectorant. It is good for colds, flus and cough and makes a good gargle for sore throat. It treats fevers, particularly of the intermittent type and also cleanses the colon. It has some irritant or rajasic properties.

Black pepper aids in the digestion of fat and helps cure obesity. Taken with honey it helps clear Kapha from the system in the morning.

CALAMUS/ SWEET FLAG

Calamus is pungent, bitter, warm and sweet in post-digestive effect. It decreases Kapha and Vata but increases Pitta. It is stimulant, stomachic, expectorant and nervine.

It is mainly used as an herb for promoting awareness, strengthening the senses of sight and hearing, improving the voice and the power of speech and increasing perception. It is a prime herb for cleansing the channels and awakening the mind and senses, as in depression or coma. It counters tremors, convulsions, muscle spasms and epilepsy. It is highly sattvic and one of the best herbs for yoga.

As a spice it is used much like cardamom for antidoting dairy, stimulating hydrochloric acid production in the stomach, countering Ama and dispelling phlegm. Combined with warm milk it not only antidotes it but makes a very nourishing and stimulating drink for the mind and nerves.

CAMOMILE

Camomile is pungent, bitter, slightly cool and pungent. It generally balances all three humors. It is stimulant, diaphoretic, carminative, analgesic and nervine.

It is good for general pain relief, for headaches, abdominal pain, menstrual pain, earache, toothache, neuralgia or pain of injuries. It can be applied externally as well as internally. It is calmative and good for nervousness, anxiety, hysteria and insomnia. It is good for neurasthenia and for poor digestion in nervous or emaciated types.

CARAWAY

Caraway is pungent, warm and pungent. It decreases Vata and Kapha and mildly increases Pitta. It is stimulant, carminative and lactagogue, much like its relatives fennel and dill. It aids in the digestion of breads.

CARDAMOM

Cardamom is pungent, sweet, only slightly warm and pungent. It is stimulant, stomachic and carminative. It is very light, pure, cleansing and highly sattvic.

It stimulates the spleen and pancreas, helps regulate sugar and water metabolism and prevent mucus formation, aids in the digestion of dairy products like milk and ice cream. It is good for nausea, belching, vomiting and morning sickness and also helps calm the fetus. It is also good for diarrhea, gas, distention and constipation. It promotes circulation and gladdens the heart. It also helps open the mind and senses.

It not only antidotes dairy but any cold or sweet food like bananas or ice cream. It is good for antidoting coffee also.

CATNIP

Catnip is pungent, slightly cool and pungent. It generally balances all three humors. It is stimulant, diaphoretic, carminative and calmative. It is good for nervousness, nervous digestion and insomnia and for the common cold and flu in children or the debilitated. It is also good for premenstrual pain, tension and anxiety, particularly in weaker constitutions.

CAYENNE

Cayenne is pungent, hot and pungent. It decreases Kapha and Vata but increases Pitta. It is stimulant, expectorant, diaphoretic, hemostatic and anthelmintic.

It strengthens the heart and improves circulation, reviving energy after shock, collapse or heart attacks. It also stops bleeding in acute conditions. It is also good for colds, flus and congestion. It cleanses the colon and aids in the digest of fat. It is the best spice for burning up Ama. It is good to antidote the effects of raw food. It is the hottest and most yang of spices.

CINNAMON

Cinnamon is pungent, sweet, hot and sweet. It decreases Kapha and Vata and increases Pitta. It is stimulant, diaphoretic, diuretic, expectorant, astringent and analgesic.

It promotes circulation and is good for cold extremities. It

strengthens the heart muscle and calms palpitations. It is good for toothache, facial nerve pain, arthritic joint pain or lower back ache. It promotes menstruation, improves fertility but can aggravate bleeding disorders. It is not recommended during pregnancy but is good postpartum. It also is good for colds, congestion and indigestion.

Cinnamon is mainly used to antidote sugar and fruit. It is good with apples and pears.

CLOVES

Cloves is pungent, hot and pungent. It is stimulant, expectorant, decongestant, anthelmintic, analgesic and aphrodisiac.

It dispels gas, counters nausea and vomiting and relieves headache. It clears the head, sinuses and lungs and is good for nerve and head pain, like toothache. It also helps open and clear the channels. Cloves is a little rajasic and promote sexual activity. Cloves is used mainly to antidote sugars.

CORIANDER

Coriander is pungent, sweet, slightly cool and pungent. It balances all the humors. It is stimulant, diaphoretic, diuretic, alterative. It is an exceptional spice in that it is cooling. Hence it is often used to counter Pitta.

It is good for colds, flus, hay fever, skin rashes, herpes, swollen glands and toxic blood conditions. It improves vision and is good for eye infections. It treats burning urination and is good for venereal diseases. It also clears and decongests the liver and is good for nervous digestion or hyperacidity. It is used mainly to counteract the effect of hot foods and hot spices, as is coriander leaf (cilantro).

CUMIN

Cumin is pungent, slightly warm and pungent. It decreases Kapha and Vata and does not overly aggravate Pitta. It is stimulant, carminative, diuretic, lactagogue, much like fennel and coriander, with which it is commonly used.

Cumin counters gas and aids in digestion and is good for the effects of overeating. It is commonly used in cooking and helps counter the effect of heavy foods like beans, potatoes, cheese or yogurt. It is good for abdominal pain and distention. It is one of the main herbs in Indian cooking.

Black cumin is also used in Ayurvedic cooking and possesses similar properties.

DILL

Dill is pungent, slightly warm and pungent and resembles it relative fennel in action. It is generally balanced in its action on the humors. The leaves are more cool in energy, as the seed is warmer. It is stimulant, carminative, antispasmodic and lactagogue. It is good for colic, cramps or diarrhea in children and much like fennel in its action.

FENNEL

Fennel is pungent, sweet, slightly warm and sweet. It generally balances all three humors and is sometimes considered to be cooling. It is perhaps the most balanced and sattvic of all spices.

It is stimulant, diuretic, carminative, antispasmodic and lactagogue. It is good for abdominal pain whether due to gas and indigestion, menstrual cramping or hernia. It treats diarrhea and colic. It is also good for vomiting, morning sickness, nausea and anorexia and treats cough, particularly dry cough. It promotes semen and increases vision. Lightly fried and with a little salt it is an excellent digestive stimulant.

FENUGREEK

Fenugreek is bitter, warm and pungent. It decreases Kapha and Vata but increases Pitta. It is stimulant, demulcent and antirheumatic.

Fenugreek promotes longevity, strengthens the nerves and is good for allergies and arthritis. It improves the skin and hair. It is a good food for convalescence and strengthens the nerves and aids in rejuvenation. It counters cold and is good for cold extremities, cold abdominal pain or for those who work outdoors in the winter. It is a common ingredient in curries.

GARLIC

Garlic possesses all tastes but sour, is predominately pungent, hot and pungent. It decreases Vata and Kapha but increases Pitta. It is stimulant, diaphoretic, expectorant, antispasmodic, antibiotic and antiseptic.

Garlic is rejuvenative and aphrodisiac for both Vata and Kapha. It strengthens the reproductive organs but may overstimulate sexual activity. It is good for hypertension and arteriosclerosis and strengthens the heart. It treats infections, chronic sores, parasites, yeast infections, chronic indigestion. It is good for colds, flus, asthma and bronchitis. It strengthens the immune system. It counters edema and depression but is also good for hysteria and vertigo.

It is good for antidoting cold and raw food like salads. It is rajasic or irritating and not recommended for yoga and meditation. It is said to ward off demons or negative influences but it also serves to keep the gods away.

GINGER

Ginger is pungent, sweet, hot and sweet. It decreases Kapha and Vata but increases Pitta. Ginger is stimulant, diaphoretic, expectorant, carminative and antiemetic. Dry ginger is hotter, drier and more stimulant and expectorant. Fresh ginger is a better diaphoretic for colds and flus, for which purpose it can be taken with honey. It calms the stomach and is good for nausea, belching and diarrhea.

Ginger improves digestion and circulation. It is good for sinus headache or arthritic pain. It is a good intestinal corrective for diarrhea or constipation. The powder made into a paste is good externally for headaches, sinus or lung congestion and muscle and joint pain. Ginger is highly sattvic and the most important and universal of all spices.

HORSERADISH

Horseradish is pungent, hot and pungent and much like mustard in its properties. It decreases Kapha and Vata but increases Pitta. It is stimulant, expectorant and diuretic.

It cleanses the lungs and sinuses and is good for colds and flus. It improves digestion and circulation. It antidotes raw vegetables and fish.

HYSSOP

Hyssop is pungent, astringent, warm and pungent. It decreases Kapha and Vata but increases Pitta. It is stimulant, diaphoretic, expectorant and astringent, much like sage. It is a good gargle for swollen gums or sore throat and is useful in colds, cough, bronchitis and asthma.

LEMON VERBENA

Lemon verbena is pungent, sour, slightly cool and pungent. It aids in the balancing of all three humors. It is soothing and calming to the digestion and also calms the nerves.

MARJORAM

Marjoram is pungent, warm and pungent. It decreases Kapha and Vata but increases Pitta. It is stimulant, diaphoretic and expectorant. It is good for colds, flus and weak digestion and also promotes menstruation.

MUSTARD

Mustard is pungent, hot and pungent. It decreases Kapha and Vata but increases Pitta. It is stimulant, analgesic and expectorant. It is perhaps the best spice for Kapha.

It clears the head and sinuses and is good for chronic cold and cough. It treats arthritis, joint pain and swelling of the joints and is good for edema. It relieves headache and abdominal pain and the powder can also be applied externally as a paste for these conditions. It serves to antidote cold and heavy food like cheese or fish.

NUTMEG

Nutmeg is pungent, astringent, warm and pungent. It decreases Vata and Kapha but increases Pitta. It is stimulant, carminative, astringent and nervine.

Nutmeg is specific for diarrhea and malabsorption. It is an effective sedative for abdominal pain, dysmenorrhea or insomnia. It is generally the most sedative of all spices and can treat many mental disorders including nervousness, anxiety and hysteria, particularly as prepared in a milk decoction. Its nature is tamasic for this reason and too much can have a dulling effect upon the mind.

OREGANO

Oregano is pungent, warm and pungent. It decreases Kapha and Vata but increases Pitta. It is stimulant, diaphoretic, carminative, analgesic and antiseptic. It is good for colds, cough, nausea, morning sickness and dysmenorrhea. It alleviates gas, distention and indigestion.

PEPPERMINT

Peppermint is pungent, slightly cool and pungent. It generally balances all three humors. It is stimulant, diaphoretic, carminative and analgesic. It is good for colds and flus with fever and sore throat. It also clears the head and is good for sinus and allergic headaches and hay fever.

It treats abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting and cramping. It opens the mind and senses and promotes harmony of the emotions.

POPPY SEEDS

Poppy seeds are pungent, astringent, sweet, warm and sweet. They decrease Vata and Kapha and increase Pitta. They are stimulant, antispasmodic, astringent. They are good for diarrhea, malabsorption, cramping pain and cough. They are often used to flavor breads and aid in their digestion.

ROSEMARY

Rosemary is pungent, bitter, slightly warm and pungent. It decreases Kapha and Vata and only mildly increases Pitta. It is stimulant, diaphoretic and an excellent emmenagogue. It eases menstruation and is good for headaches. It harmonizes and strengthens the heart and emotions.

SAFFRON

Saffron is pungent, slightly warm and pungent. It helps balance all three humors. It is stimulant, aphrodisiac, emmenagogue and carminative.

It strengthens the heart, improves circulation and builds the blood. It helps dissolve blood clots and improves the healing of sores, wounds, traumatic injuries and is good post-surgery. It strongly promotes menstruation in women and should not be taken during pregnancy. It relieves menstrual cramps and is good for uterine tumors and cancer generally. It also strengthens the liver and spleen and aids in building the blood. It is one of the best aphrodisiacs, particularly for women. It is often taken with milk and is good with rice. However, its expense often prohibits its usage, though only low dosages are required.

SAGE

Sage is pungent, astringent, warm and pungent. It decreases Kapha and Vata but increases Pitta. It is stimulant, diaphoretic, diuretic and nervine. It opens the lungs, head and sinuses and helps clear the channels, improving voice, perception and thought. It relieves excessive sexual desire.

As an astringent it is good for sore throat. It aids in the digestion of meat and dairy products and stops the flow of milk in nursing women. Taken cold it is a good diuretic for urinary tract dysfunction.

SPEARMINT

Spearmint is pungent, slightly cool and pungent. It generally balances all three humors. It is stimulant, diaphoretic, diuretic and calmative. It is good for difficult, painful or burning urination taken cold. It is good for colic and indigestion in children and promotes sleep. It counters nausea, vomiting and morning sickness.

STAR ANISE

Star anise, though unrelated botanically to anise and fennel, has similar properties to them. It is pungent, sweet, warm and pungent. It decreases Vata and Kapha and increases Pitta.

THYME

Thyme is pungent, warm and pungent. It decreases Kapha and Vata but increases Pitta. It is stimulant, diaphoretic, anti-cough, anthelmintic and antiseptic. It is good for severe cough, including whooping cough. It counters bad breath, is good for indigestion, gas and menstrual disorders.

TURMERIC

Turmeric is bitter, pungent, astringent, slightly warm and pungent. It generally balances all the humors. It is stimulant, alterative, antiseptic and analgesic.

It cleanses the blood and lymphatics and helps dissolve tumors and blood clots. It improves circulation, promotes menstruation, strengthens the muscles and treats soft tissue injuries. It is good for swollen breasts, breast or uterine tumors and cancer generally. It clears and decongests the liver. It aids in the digestion of sugar, fats and oils and is helpful in diabetes and hypoglycemia. Externally the powder can be made into a paste and used to treat wounds, injuries, sores and inflamed muscles and joints. Turmeric is the main ingredient in all curries.

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PART III. LESSON 5

STUDY EXERCISE

Begin to collect your own spices and experiment with their properties in cooking, antidoting food and treating common diseases like colds and flus, menstrual disorders etc. Begin with the ten spices you find most interesting or useful.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What are the general properties of oils?
2. Why is sesame oil so useful?
3. How is coconut oil specially useful?
4. How is mustard oil specially useful?
5. What are the general properties of sugar?

6. What are the special properties of honey?
7. What is jaggary?
8. What are the properties of vinegar?
9. What are the properties of coffee?
10. Why is distilled water not usually recommended?

11. What are some of the properties of ginger?
12. What are some of the properties of coriander?
13. What are some of the properties of fennel?
14. What are some of the properties of garlic?
15. What are some of the properties of turmeric?

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PART III. LESSON 6

HERBAL THERAPY

Herbal therapy is perhaps the most important therapeutic method in Ayurveda and herbs are perhaps the most important Ayurvedic healing substance. However, many traditional formulas also contain minerals and metals. These cannot be sold as yet legally in this country. For this reason a more purely herbal form of Ayurveda is arising and even companies in India aiming at export to the west are developing such purely herbal remedies.

In this course we will not go into great detail into the materia medica of Ayurveda, because much of this information is already present in THE YOGA OF HERBS. Moreover, AYURVEDIC HEALING, A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE, emphasizes the herbal treatment of disease and presents many herbs and formulas. It can be consulted for the other disease treatment modalities mentioned in this course also. PLANETARY HERBOLOGY (by Michael Tierra), which I edited, gives additional herbs and information that can be consulted along with this course. These three books together provide an extensive materia medica of herbs and AYURVEDIC HEALING gives many formulas for Ayurvedic usage. An additional handbook of Ayurvedic formulas is planned for some point in the future.

The following sections of the course outline therapeutic methods that are primarily herbal in nature.

ENERGETIC USAGE OF HERBS VERSUS SPECIFIC USAGE

Energetics of herbs, their taste, heating or cooling action and action on the humors is only a general guideline. Herbs are also used for 'specific usage' (like prabhava, see YOGA OF HERBS pg. 27). For example, an herb like Vasa (see below) may be used as an anti-cough agent for treating almost any kind of cough, though technically its energetics may aggravate Vata.

Using herbs singly we must be more careful of their energetics, because the effects of it are not balanced by other herbs.

In formulas we have more latitude because the energetics of the formula will depend upon the weight of all the herbs. We may add a cool herb to a formula to treat a cold cough, like Vasa along with warm herbs like ginger, cinnamon and cloves, as that herb is good specifically for cough. The formula will still be warming and will dispel the cold, if the majority of herbs in it are warming, and the anti-cough herb will contribute only its anti-cough action.

We can also use herbs for specific conditions or diseases. Arjuna is good for all kinds of heart disease. The diseases or humors we target will depend upon how we combine it. Arjuna and Ashwagandha will be good for Vata, Arjuna and Gotu Kola for Pitta and Arjuna and Guggul or Calamus for Kapha.

We may also use herbs symptomatically, particularly in transient or surface diseases. Basil and ginger are good for the common cold and will not aggravate Pitta unless they are taken beyond the period of the specific disease (assuming we have a more typical or Kapha type common cold).

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ADDITIONAL INDIAN HERBS

In the YOGA OF HERBS a number of special Indian herbs were introduced. These include amalaki, ashwagandha, bibhitaki, gotu kola (brahmi), gokshura (tribulis), guggul, haritaki, long pepper (pippali), manjishta (Indian madder), musta (cyperus) neem, punarnava, shatavari, vamsa rochana and vidari khanda. Here we are adding several more, as unlike most of the more common herbs mentioned in this course, they cannot be found in readily available reference books. Many of them are special powerful Ayurvedic tonics, for which equivalents here usually cannot be easily found. More factors of their usage are outlined in AYURVEDIC HEALING.

Most of these herbs are used in Ayurvedic preparations now becoming available in this country. The others, like the Chinese herbs now becoming commonly known and used in this country, are worthy of addition to our global materia medica. There remain yet many other important Ayurvedic herbs like these useful in future herbal practice and research.

The format followed for the herbs here is essentially the same as the YOGA OF HERBS. Energetics is rasa, virya, vipak, taste, energy and post-digestive effect.

ARJUNA
Terminalia arjuna/ Combretaceae
Part Used----bark
Energetics----astringent/ cool/ sweet
balances all three humors
Systems----circulatory, digestive
Actions----cardiac tonic and stimulant, astringent, hemostatic, alterative
Indications----heart diseases, angina, traumatic injury, broken bones, hemoptysis, diarrhea, malabsorption, venereal diseases
Precautions----none noted
Preparation----powder, decoction, herbal wine

Arjuna is a close relative of the three herbs of the Triphala formula and of similar importance in Ayurvedic medicine. It is a stimulant, tonic and rejuvenative for the heart, useful in all types of heart diseases and strongly promoting longevity. It can aid in recovery after heart attacks, as well as help prevent them in the first place. It helps promote healing of damaged tissues generally and is specific for broken bones.

ASHOK
Saraca indica/ Leguminosae
Energetics-----astringent, bitter/ cold/ sweet
reduces Pitta, also Vata and Kapha to some extent
Systems--------circulatory
Actions--------astringent, hemostatic, diuretic, uterine sedative
Indications----bleeding disorders, menorrhagia, leucorrhea, uterine cysts, hemorrhoids, diarrhea
Precautions----amenorrhea, blood stagnation
Preparation----decoction, herbal wine, ghee

Ashok is one of the most important Ayurvedic herbs in gynecological disorders. Western herbs of a similar nature are red raspberry, mugwort or shepard's purse.

ATMAGUPTA (also Kapikachu and Vanari)
Mucuna pruriens/ Papilionaceae
Part Used-------seed
Energetics------sweet/ warm/ sweet
decreases Vata, increases Pitta and Kapha
Systems---------nervous, reproductive
Actions---------tonic, rejuvenative, aphrodisiac, astringent
Indications-----general debility, sexual debility, impotence, infertility, leucorrhea, spermatorrhea, menorrhagia
Precautions-----not used in congestive conditions
Preparation-----powder, milk decoction, confections

The seeds of this plant are one of the best tonics and aphrodisiacs to the reproductive system, male or female. They are commonly used with amalaki, ashwagandha, shatavari, gokshura, white and black musali and other tonics to make various pills and herbal jellies. It is one of the more expensive Ayurvedic herbal tonics but still far less expensive than ginseng.

BILVA (Bael)
Aegle marmelos/ Rutaceae
Part Used-----fruit (usually immature)

Energetics----bitter, astringent/ warm/ pungent
decreases Kapha and Vata, increases Pitta
Systems-------digestive, excretory
Actions-------astringent, stomachic
Indications---malabsorption, chronic diarrhea, dysentery
Precautions---not used during fevers
Preparation---powder, decoction, confection

Bilva is an important Ayurvedic astringent and for chronic weak digestion and malabsorption. It is one of the most sacred plants to Shiva.

BLACK MUSALI (Kala musli)
Curculigo orchioides/ Amaryllidaceae
Part Used----root
Energetics---pungent, sweet/ warm/ sweet
decrease Vata, increases Pitta and Kapha
Systems------reproductive
Actions------tonic, stimulant, demulcent, aphrodisiac, rejuvenative
Indications--general and sexual debility, venereal diseases, menorrhagia, dysmenorrhea, arthritis
Precautions--febrile diseases
Preparation--powder, milk decoction, confection

This is another important Ayurvedic tonic also used in Chinese medicine. It is good for impotence, infertility, chronic or degenerative arthritis and many Vata diseases of the deeper tissues.

CHITRAK
Plumbago zeylonica
Part Used----root
Energetics---pungent/ warm/ pungent
decreases Kapha and Vata, increases Pitta and Agni
Systems------digestive
Actions------stimulant, diaphoretic, carminative, emmenagogue, cholagogue
Uses---------lack of appetite, indigestion, hemorrhoids, edema, parasites, skin diseases, mental disorders, arthritis
Precautions--use low dosage, large dosages can be toxic
Preparation--powder

Perhaps the best Ayurvedic herb for improving the digestive fire and increasing the digestive power of liver, spleen and small intestine, Chitrak often works even when hot spices like cayenne fail. It is better than Trikatu or Asafoetida.

GUDUCHI (Amrit)
Tinosporia cordifolia/ Menispermaceae
Part Used----stem and root, powdered bitter starchy extract
Energetics---bitter, sweet/ hot/ sweet
alleviates all three humors
Systems------circulatory, digestive
Actions------bitter tonic, febrifuge, alterative, diuretic
Indications--fever, convalescence from febrile diseases, malaria, jaundice, tuberculosis, gout, skin diseases, hemorrhoids
Precautions--none noted
Preparation--extract (Guduchi or Giloy Sattva)

Guduchi is a good rejuvenative for Pitta. It makes a good nutritive herb for recovery periods from fever or infectious disease. It is also useful in chronic low grade fevers or difficult to treat infections. Its hot nature is anti-Ama, not anti Pitta. This is one of the best herbs for such conditions as Aids and Herpes. It is rejuvenative for the immune system. The bitter starch which comes from it, much like the bitter root used by the American Indians, is the best way to take it.

KUTAJ (Kurchi)
Holarrhena antidysenterica/ Apocynaceae
Part Used------bark
Energetics-----astringent, bitter/cold/ pungent
decreases Pitta and Kapha/ increases Vata
Systems--------digestive, excretory
Actions--------astringent, anthelmintic, amoebicidal
Indications----diarrhea and dysentery (both acute and chronic), malabsorption, hemorrhoids, menorrhagia
Precautions----constipation
Preparation----powder, decoction, herbal wine

Kutaj is the main Ayurvedic herb for bacterial or amoebic dysentery; hence good to know of if one travels in India. It is a bit like golden seal.

KATUKA (Kutki)
Picrorhiza kurroa
Part Used-----root
Energetics----bitter/ cold/ pungent
decreases Pitta and Kapha/ increases Vata
Systems-------digestive, urinary
Actions-------bitter tonic, antipyretic, alterative, laxative, antibiotic

Uses----------diarrhea, dysentery, fever, hepatitis, asthma, bronchitis, parasites, toxic blood conditions, obesity
Precautions---high Vata (air) conditions
Preparation---powder, decoction, ghee

Katuka is the most commonly used Ayurvedic bitter tonic. It has a place like golden seal in the natural medicine of India. The Chinese use it, most often as a substitute for the more expensive, coptis (gold thread), their favorite bitter. It is tonic to the liver. It is sometimes classified as heating in Ayurveda because it relieves Kapha. It is classed as cold by the Chinese because it clears fever and inflammation (reduces Pitta). Vata types will find it depleting and not warming in its effect.

LODHRA
Symplocos racemosa/ Styraceae
Part Used-----bark
Energetics----bitter/ cold/ pungent
decreases Pitta and Kapha, increases Vata
Systems-------blood, menstrual
Actions-------astringent, hemostatic, alterative, diuretic
Indications---excess menstrual bleeding, uterine hemorrhage, inflammatory diseases of the eye, diarrhea, dysentery
Precautions---amenorrhea
Preparation---powder, decoction

Lodhra is an important astringent and menstrual regulator and a significant Ayurvedic hemostatic, much like manjistha (madder).

PASHANA BHEDA
Bergenea ligulata/ Saxifragaceae
Part Used-----root
Energetics----astringent, sweet/ cold/ sweet
decreases Pitta and Kapha, increases Vata
Systems-------urinary, genital, respiratory
Actions-------diuretic, demulcent, astringent, lithotriptic
Indications---urinary tract stones (particularly phosphate but also oxalate), enlarged prostate, tumors, diarrhea, cough
Precautions---conditions of cold and weak digestion
Preparation---powder, decoction

Many related varieties of bergenia and saxifrage grow in the West and are used ornamentally. It is likely some contain this property also. Pashana bheda dissolves stones but is much less irritating and drying than most such herbs and safer to use on weaker patients, in this regard something like corn silk.

SHANKHA PUSHPI
Canscora decussata/ Gentianaceae; Convolvulus pluricaulis
Energetics----bitter/warm/pungent
generally balancing
Systems-------nervous
Actions-------nervine, sedative, tonic
Indications---nervous debility, epilepsy, insanity
Precautions---none major noted
Preparation---powder, decoction

This is one of the most important Ayurvedic nervines along with gotu kola, calamus and jatamansi. It is excellent for nerve pain, particularly that owing to cold.

SHILAJIT
Energetics----pungent, bitter/warm/ pungent
alleviates all three humors
Systems-------urinary, nervous, reproductive
Actions-------alterative, diuretic, lithotriptic, antiseptic, tonic, rejuvenative
Indications---diabetes, obesity, jaundice, gall stones, dysuria, cystitis, edema, kidney stones, hemorrhoids, sexual debility, menstrual disorders, asthma, epilepsy, insanity, skin diseases, parasites
Precautions---not for febrile diseases
Preparation---pill, powder

Shilajit is a kind of natural mineral pitch or asphalt from the Himalayas. There are several varieties, of which the black has the main therapeutic properties. It can be expensive. It is ascribed great curative powers and considered capable of treating most diseases. It is one of the most important rejuvenatives and tonics, particularly for Vata, Kapha and the kidneys, as in the case of diabetes. It can be taken for general health maintenance and is good for those who do much mental work or practice yoga.

VASA
Adhota vasika/ Acanthaceae
Part Used-----root
Energetics----bitter, astringent/ cold/ pungent
decreases Pitta and Kapha/ increases Vata
Systems-------respiratory
Actions-------expectorant, demulcent, astringent, hemostatic, diuretic
Indications---colds, cough, asthma, vomiting, fever, bleeding
Precautions---not good by itself in high Vata conditions
Preparation---powder, decoction, herbal jellies

Vasa is one of the main Ayurvedic herbs for the lungs and many cough remedies are made with it. It is similar to mullein in its effects on the lungs.

VIDANGA
Embelia ribes/ Myrsinaceae
Part Used-----fruit
Energetics----pungent, astringent/ warm/ pungent
decreases Pitta and Kapha, can increase Vata
Systems-------digestive, excretory
Actions-------anthelmintic, carminative, laxative, expectorant
Indications---worms (tape, round), obesity
Precautions---sexual debility
Preparation---powder, decoction

Vidanga is the most important Ayurvedic herb for parasites and treats worms of all types.

WHITE MUSALI (Safet musli)
Asparagus adscendens/ Liliaceae
Part Used-----root
Energetics----sweet, bitter/ cold/ sweet
decreases Pitta and Vata, increases Kapha
Systems-------reproductive, respiratory
Actions-------nutritive tonic, demulcent, galactagogue
Indications---general and sexual debility, diarrhea, leucorrhea
Precautions---Ama and congestive disorders
Preparation---powder, milk decoction, confections

This herb is a relative of Shatavari. It is often used in combination with it, along with white musali. Shatavari is often substituted for it. It is a good building herb for wasting diseases and tissue deficiency, also good during pregnancy or postpartum for nourishing the fetus and promoting the breast milk.

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LIST OF AYURVEDIC PREPARATIONS

THE FIVE BASIC PREPARATIONS

1. KWATHA - Hot Decoction:
made by boiling herbs over a low flame for fifteen minutes to one hour, milk decoctions are also good

2. PHANTA - Hot infusion
made by infusing herbs in boiling water for fifteen to thirty minutes

3. HIMA - Cold infusion
made by soaking herbs in cool water for one to twelve hours

4. SWARASA - Fresh juice
extracted juice of herbs

5. KALKA - Crushed pulp of the plant, can be used externally as a poultice, or cooked as decoction or infusion

Note: Ayurvedic pharmacies do sell bottled decoctions. Generally for decoctions or infusions, the herbs are powdered and then soaked overnight in sixteen times the amount of cold water, then boiled the next morning down to 1/4 the amount of water and drunk that day. Decoctions may be used as anupanas (vehicles for taking other herbal mixtures, particularly pills).

TRITURATION - Mixing the powders of herbs or minerals together in a mortar and pestle, turning to the right. Fresh juices or decoctions of herbs or small amounts of aromatic oils are often added, mantras can be chanted during the process.

OTHER PREPARATIONS

CHURNA - Powders, made by powdering the dry herbs: may be taken with water, milk, ghee or honey as anupanas, sometimes are made into pills

GUTI-VATI - Tablets or pills, made from powdered herbs, extracts, juices, etc., sometimes purified minerals or metals are also used: generally taken with anupanas, as the churnas

AVALEHA, PAKA, GUDA - Herbal jellies and confections, made with honey, sugar etc. and usually the fresh herbs or fruit and sometimes nuts, examples Chyavan prash, Brahma rasayan, Shatavari Guda: generally taken with water, milk or buttermilk as anupanas. May have special minerals added to them or silver foil in some instances.

ASAVA - Herbal wines made with fresh juices of the herbs or uncooked herbs.
ARISHTA - Herbal wines made with decoctions or cooked herbs. Examples Draksha, Ashwagandharishta.

Ayurvedic herbal wines are self-fermented, usually using Dhataki flowers (Woodfordia floribunda). However, some practitioners do use yeast. Various aromatic substances, usually herbs powders like ginger or cloves, are added after fermentation (called Prakshepa Dravyas). They are prepared in wooden vats much like grape wines. Often taken with water.

TINCTURES - Made by soaking herbs in alcohol, like Western herbal tinctures but not so commonly used: example Ayurvedic tincture of camphor.

TAILA - Medicated oils, made by cooking herbs in oil (generally sesame) and water (one part oil to four parts water), evaporating all the water over a low head and then straining. Coconut, mustard, almond, peanut and other oils can be used in this way, as can beeswax or animal fats. Sometimes juices or aromatic oils of herbs are also added. Mainly for external usage.

GHRITA - Medicated ghee, made by cooking whole herb in ghee and water (one part ghee to four parts water), evaporating all the water over a low heat, and then straining: Essentially just a special form of medicated oil: ghritas are often applied to non-healing sores: do not require anupana but milk is sometimes prescribed afterwards. Not uncommonly used internally.

AROMATIC OILS - Made by distillation of various aromatic plants, like cloves, peppermint, cinnamon or bitter like Neem; also called Taila but sukshma taila (subtle oils).

GUGGUL - Resins and balsams, generally purified by cooking with other herbs or evaporating the decoction of the resin into a solid mass. Most are made with Commiphora mukul (guggul), a relative of myrrh.

SARA - Resins

KSHIRA - Exudations from various plants

GHANA - Herbal decoction evaporated to solid, can then be made into pills or tablets

SATTVA - Active or concentrated principles herb; those which are water soluble, then dried: example guduchi sattva.

ARKA - Aromatic waters, clear saturated aqueous solutions containing volatile oils or other subtle or aromatic substances; produced by distillation. Usually used as Anupanas (mediums for taking herbs). Examples fennel, jatamansi, ajwan.

KSHARA - Extraction of alkalis from plants

LAVANA - Salts

Obtained from plant ashes, usually after soaking in water. Mainly diuretic, laxative, expectorant and decongestant.

DRAVAK - A mixture of various ashes of plants, salts, and alkalies distilled to produce a liquid substance, like Shankhadrava

DRUTI - Solid substances converted into liquids, like liquefied sulphur

HONEY - Honey made from special plants with herbal properties or that taken from wild bees. Generally used as an anupana.

LEPA - Pastes, applications of the kalka or paste of herbs for external usage.

UPANAHA - Poultices, usually made with the the kalka or paste of herbs, either fresh or reconstituted by soaking whole herb in water.

MALAHARA - Ointments

PANAK - Crushed fruit and their preparations; usually used in Avalehas.

NASYA - Herbs taken through the nose, may be powders, decoctions or medicated oils and ghees.

BASTI - Herbs taken through the rectum via an enema bag, tailas and milk decoctions are taken in this way. Herbs can be used as douches in a similar manner.

ANJANA - Ointments, mainly to apply to the eyes

SURMA - Herbal eye drops

VARTTI - Suppositories, dried herbal pastes

MANJANA - Ayurvedic toothpowders; made mainly with special clays, astringents and aromatic oils.

MINERAL PREPARATIONS

Ayurveda employs a whole series of mineral preparations and often mixes them with herbs in various ways. Such minerals are purified in various ways, mainly by repeated firing or heating of the mineral but also by trituration, and soaking and mixing with various herbs (like aloe gel) or animal products (like milk).

BHASMA - Herbal oxide ashes: made by various forms of purification methods, including heating metals or minerals until the suitable oxide is produced

PISHTI - Minerals like coral repeatedly triturated in rose water, less expensive than Bhasmas

Usually taken with honey, but sometimes ghee, butter or water.

RASA - Mineral preparations with purified minerals and herbs triturated repeatedly: made into powders or pills, taken with herbal decoctions, milk or water

KAJJALI - Purified compound of sulphur and mercury, the basis of most Rasa preparations

PARPATTI - Kajjali (purified sulphur-mercury), ghee and other metal and mineral ashes, produced from trituration and heating: taken in the form of flakes, good for chronic weak digestion and malabsorption

KUPIPAKVA RASAYANA - Kajjali with triturated herbs heated in a glass shell for a specific period of time LAUHA MANDURA - Iron preparations with herbs and other minerals, for weak blood or poor digestion

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PART III. LESSON 6

STUDY EXERCISE

Gradually begin to collect and work with a few main herbs according to their therapeutic actions. The following are some good ones to begin with but you can set up your own guidelines if you wish:

ANALGESICS
For stopping pain
turmeric, camomile, prickly ash, cloves, wintergreen

HERBAL ANTIBIOTICS
For more general antibacterial and antiviral action to treat infections, also mainly bitter:
echinacea, golden seal, katuka, pau d'arco

ASTRINGENTS
For stopping bleeding, diarrhea or sweating
agrimony, plantain, red raspberry leaf, white oak bark

HERBAL BITTERS
For cleansing the blood and lymphatics, countering obesity and regulating sugar and fat metabolism:
barberry, gentian, golden seal, katuka

CARMINATIVES
For intestinal gas, cramping, diarrhea, malabsorption:
cardamom, fennel, fresh ginger, nutmeg, orange peel

DIAPHORETICS
For colds, flus, sinus or lung congestion:
cinnamon, fresh ginger, peppermint, sage, yarrow

DIURETICS
For edema, painful, difficult or burning urination, urinary tract infections:
coriander, corn silk, horsetail, lemon grass, parsley

EMMENAGOGUES
For promoting or easing menstruation, cleansing the uterus:
motherwort, pennyroyal, rosemary, safflower

EXPECTORANTS

For dispelling phlegm and congestion and stopping cough: coltsfoot, licorice, mullein, mustard seeds, thyme

LAXATIVES

strong bitter laxatives: rhubarb, senna;
bulk laxatives: psyllium, flaxseed:
also Triphala

NERVINES

For insomnia, nervousness and nerve pain.
gotu kola, calamus, camomile, skullcap, valerian

STIMULANTS

For conditions of cold extremity, weak digestion and degenerated organic functions:
black pepper, cayenne, cloves, cinnamon, dry ginger, long pepper (pippali)

HERBAL TONICS

For building the tissues and strengthening organic functions, for longevity and rejuvenation.
For Vata: ashwagandha, garlic, guggul, licorice
For Pitta: aloe gel, comfrey root, licorice, shatavari
For Kapha: elecampane, long pepper (pippali), shilajit

VULNERARIES

For treating cuts, wounds, injuries, burns:
aloe gel, chickweed, comfrey leaf, honey, plantain, turmeric

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PART III. LESSON 6

STUDY QUESTIONS

FROM THE YOGA OF HERBS

These questions are for a kind of ministudy guide to the YOGA OF HERBS, to make sure you have grasped the main points of that text which are useful for this course.

1. What are the five main methods of herbal decoction?
2. What is a medicated oil (siddha taila)?
3. What is a medicated ghee (siddha ghrita)?
4. What is a medicated jelly (avaleha)?
5. Why are herbal wines very useful in Ayurveda?

6. Name some diaphoretic herbs?
7. Name some diuretic herbs?
8. What is astringent action?
9. What is an emmenagogue?

10. What are the two types of expectorant herbs in Ayurveda?
11. Why are aphrodisiacs important in Ayurveda?
12. How does the oriental idea of a tonic herb differ from that of the more common western herbalism.
13. What are some of the dosages of herbs for common usage?
14. What are the main properties of Trikatu?

15. What are the main properties of Triphala?
16. How is asafoetida used?
17. How is gotu kola used?
18. How is calamus used?
19. What is guggul?

20. How is ashwagandha used?
21. How is shatavari used?
22. How is bala used?

FROM THIS CHAPTER

1. What is shilajit and how is it used?
2. How is arjuna used?
3. How is atmagupta (kapikacchu) used?

4. How is guduchi used?
5. How is chitrak used?
6. What is the difference between using an herb for its specific action, as opposed to its general energetics?

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PART III. LESSON 7

AYURVEDIC THERAPEUTIC APPROACHES 1.
TONIFICATION AND REDUCTION

There are many different therapies applied in Ayurveda. Yet these can all be defined under two groups, supplementation and reduction, also called tonification and elimination. Reduction, "langhana", literally means "to lighten". Supplementation, "Brimhana" (from the root "bri" meaning to expand), means "to make heavy."

Reduction therapies decrease excesses in the body and are indicated for overweight, accumulation of toxins and excess humors. Supplementation methods nourish deficiencies in the body and are indicated for underweight, debility or tissue weakness. Reducing methods aim at elimination of factors that may cause disease. Tonification methods work at building up inadequate energy or lack of substance in the body that may bring it about or may have been caused by it.

Reducing methods are indicated in the acute stage of disease, when the disease attack is strong. In Ayurveda, reducing methods are also employed to eliminate deep seated toxins as part of a disease prevention, internal cleansing program. Tonification methods are more indicated in chronic diseases, in convalescence or after reduction methods have been used.

Reduction methods include all the herbal means of eliminating toxins from the system. These include diaphoresis (elimination through sweat), purgation (elimination through the feces), diuresis (elimination through the urine), emesis (elimination through vomiting), expectoration (discharge of phlegm), carminative herbs (discharge of gas), and direct pathogen destroying action of blood, lymph and bile cleansing herbs, like bitters and alteratives. These are indicated for specific diseases as outlined in THE YOGA OF HERBS.

Tonification method is more simpler and consists of herbs to increase strength and nutrition, like ashwagandha, licorice or ginseng.

The usual rule is first to reduce and then to tonify. If we tonify first we may feed any toxins or excess humors in the body

and make conditions worse. In this regard, almost all of us can use benefit from some reduction methods, if only to make our systems purer so that we can benefit from tonics. Such things as fasting or blood cleansing programs are useful in this way.

However, there are some conditions where an individual is too weak for any reduction methods and where tonification must be given first. An individual may not have the strength for purification. The two methods may also be combined to some degree, particularly for milder and long term therapy.

Tonification is also called "gladdening" (santarpana) therapy as it consists of methods to of giving us greater nourishment, care, relaxation, ease and enjoyment in life. Tonification therapy aims at making the individual feel better about themselves in life. It encourages more faith, love and positive attitude in life.

Reduction therapy is called "discontenting" (asantarpana), as it includes practises of discipline, hard living and giving things up. It makes us doubt ourselves more and question more who we are and what we are doing in life. It involves self-examination, rectification and atonement.

INDICATIONS OF THE TWO METHODS

Reduction is indicated primarily for Kapha and supplementation for Vata. This is because Kapha the main attribute of Kapha is heaviness and Vata lightness. Pitta usually requires mixed reduction and supplementation therapy.

The reduction methods for Kapha, then, are strong, like fasting or vomiting therapy. For Vata they are mild, like enema therapy. For Pitta they are moderate, like purgation.

Tonification methods for Vata, conversely, are strong, with powerful tonic herbs like ashwagandha or ginseng or a rich diet with many oils. Tonification for Kapha is mild, with herbs for supplementation that are not too heavy, like elecampane or long pepper. Tonification for Pitta is moderate with cooling tonics like shatavari or aloe gel.

Generally we choose a tonification method if the patient has chronic low energy, a weak pulse, emaciation, lack of muscle tone or a flaccid and weak type obesity. A reduction method is indicated if the individual has strong energy, a strong pulse, good muscle tone or much muscle tension and a pronounced tongue coating.

REDUCTION THERAPY

Reduction therapy in Ayurveda has two parts, called "palliation" and "purification".

Palliation, "Shamana", means literally calming or pacifying

(from the root "sham" meaning "to calm"). It is largely for reducing Ama, the undigested food mass, and calming the humors so they can be dispelled from the body through purification therapy. The humor may be mixed with improperly digested toxic accumulations in the body, which irritate it and make its symptoms more complex. This must first be separated from the humor to enable us to work on it directly.

Palliation is also a milder reducing therapy for those who cannot take the stronger purification therapies or who do not have the time or resources to do so. It can be part of general constitutional balancing methods and life-style.

PALLIATION

Palliation is said to have seven parts:

1. "Herbs for burning up toxins;" such herbs are spices like ginger or bitters like gentian.
2. "Herbs for stimulating the digestion;" mainly also spices and bitters including milder ones like fennel.
3. "Fasting from food;" which may be as limited as only light eating.
4. "Fasting from water", or reduced intake of fluids.
5. "Exercise;" or physical exertion.
6. "Sunbathing;" or exposure to heat and light, and
7. "Exposure to wind;" or simply exposure to the elements. (A.H. XIV.7)

These methods all serve to strengthen the digestive fire, Agni, and burn up toxins. They cleanse the digestive tract and allow the toxins in the deeper tissues to drain into it so they can be eliminated. They are mainly for Sama conditions.

VATA

Palliation for Vata consists of the following---

1. Oil massage with abundant oil.

Preferably medicated forms of sesame oil should be used, combining sweet herbs like ashwagandha, bala and shatavari along with Vata reducing spices like cinnamon, ginger or calamus. Also useful is almond or apricot oil. Touch should be warm, gentle and firm. Oils should not be applied until most Ama is removed with hot spices.

2. Mild sweating therapy with sweat baths, steam baths or hot tubs.

Mild diaphoretic herbs can be used like cinnamon and ginger,

or tonics like bala, comfrey root or dashamula (a special combination of ten Ayurvedic roots). Saunas and dry sweats may aggravate Vata. Adequate liquids should be given during sweating and it should be followed by a period of rest. Care should be taken not to over sweat the patient. Signs of over sweating include excess thirst, fainting, vertigo, dizziness or convulsions.

3. Use of tonic and invigorating herbs like garlic, ashwagandha, bala, comfrey root and ginseng, along with spices like ginger, fennel and cinnamon, as well as herbal wines like draksha or a small amount of red wine.

Tonic herbs should be given with care and generally not large amounts, particularly if the tongue coating is pronounced or if abdominal distention and constipation occur.

4. Sesame and medicated sesame oils taken internally and externally, or ghee.

Internally amounts more than a tablespoon or two a day cannot be taken for more than a week at a time or they must be followed with enema therapy according to the purification method. Oils also should not be taken in large amounts internally when there is weakness of the digestive fire or abdominal distention.

5. Mild exercise with calming yoga postures (sitting postures, lying postures, mahamudra etc.) or tai chi, mild sunbathing but avoidance of wind and cold.

Also mild and strengthening breathing exercises are good (like alternate nostril pranayama or So ham pranayama, mentally chanting the mantra "so" on inhalation and "ham" on exhalation and effortlessly allowing the breath to deepen).

Any strong physical exertion should be avoided.

6. Adequate and nutritious diet, generally anti-Vata diet.

This includes dairy, nuts, grains like brown rice, wheat or oats, root vegetables, strengthening fruit or possibly meat, with mild spices like ginger, cardamom, cinnamon or fennel. One should try to eat more and improve nutrition. Overeating, however, should be avoided. Short fasts can be taken, one to three days, with spice teas like ginger and cinnamon.

7. Staying warm and warm clothing and environment, warm colors like red, orange and gold with moist colors like white.

Physical comfort, soft beds and pleasant environment with a good deal of self-care is also good.

8. Physical rest and mental relaxation.

This includes avoiding excess travelling and too much noise or distraction, allowing sleep during the day if tired, a secure and stable life style, with happiness, joy and contentment.

9. Calming and peace generating meditations, observance of silence, emptying the mind and surrendering of worry, fear and anxiety.

Palliation for Vata has a nutritive or tonification side and is not too reducing. It only differs from tonification therapy for Vata in that more spices and lighter diet is followed until Ama is cleared. Moreover, tonification herbs are taken only in lower dosages.

PITTA

Palliation for Pitta consists of the following---

1. Light massage with moderate amounts of oil.

Preferably cooling oils like coconut, olive or ghee, should be used along with cooling bitter and sweet herbs like gotu kola, bhringaraj, sandalwood, licorice or shatavari. Brahmi oil is excellent. Touch should be gentle, soothing and a little cool.

2. Cooling showers or baths or mild sweating should be taken, preferably with cool and dispersing herbs like mint, yarrow or burdock and followed by a cool shower.

Too much sweating may cause thirst, burning sensation, dizziness or fever.

3. Cooling herbs of bitter and astringent nature.

These include aloe gel, barberry, dandelion, burdock, red clover, comfrey and coriander, to help cleanse the blood and bile and drain excess heat from the system, mainly herbal alteratives.

4. Use of ghee externally and internally, particularly in the eyes. One or two tablespoons can be taken per day.

Medicate ghees are preferable like Triphala ghee or Brahmi ghee.

5. Moderate exercise in cool air and wind, walking at night (especially under the moon) and other mild activities.

Cooling type yoga postures, like shoulderstand, and pranayama (like shitali or lunar pranayama) can be done. Strong aerobic exercise or heavy exertion, particularly in the sun, should be avoided. Exercise should not cause strong sweating.

6. Moderate and cool diet, generally anti-Pitta diet;

Such as sweet fruit, raw vegetables, green vegetable juices, cool grains like rice and wheat, mung beans, cool spices like coriander, cumin or fennel; avoidance of spices, salt and vinegar. Moderate fasting can be done along with cooling herbs, like dandelion or burdock, green vegetable juices or fruit juices like pineapple or pomegranate. If a little weak more dairy products like milk can be taken.

7. Cool fragrances like sandalwood, vetivert or rose, applied as oils as well as inhaled, cool clothing and pleasant environment, cool colors like blue, green and white; resorting to cool breezes, moonlight and avoidance of sun, heat and fire.

8. Relaxation, diversion, amusement and play, sweet and affectionate emotions, love and friendship and frequenting of water and gardens. Avoidance of conflict, argument, aggression, ambition, too much strain, striving, work and effort.

9. Meditations involving the positive direction of energy, peace, love, forgiveness. Visualizations are often good and creative or artistic expression.

Palliation therapy for Pitta is cooling and calming and neither strongly tonifying nor strongly reducing. It differs from tonification method as the latter is much more nutritive.

KAPHA----

Palliation for Kapha consists of the following----

1. Strong dry massages or deep body work, with possible causing of slight pain.

Light oils like mustard may be used or hot herbs in a light oil or alcohol base like cinnamon, mustard or camphor.

2. Strong sweating therapies with dry heat and hot diaphoretic and expectorant herbs like ginger, sage, thyme or cinnamon.

Sweating can be done to the point of discomfort but not to the point of exhaustion.

3. Internally taking dry and hot pungent herbs like ginger, cayenne, elecampane, calamus, myrrh, garlic and trikatu. Bitters like aloe gel, turmeric or barberry can also be used for reducing fat. Such herbs are best taken as powders, with honey.

4. Use of old (over one year) raw honey, particularly from spicy flowers like sage, and dry oils like mustard or flaxseed internally too loosen phlegm.

5. Strong aerobic exercise like jogging in wind and sun, some heavy physical labor. Care should be taken that adequate physical strength exists for such exertion but generally Kapha types should overexercise. Exercise should raise a strong sweat and leave the individual feeling tired.

6. Light diet, generally anti-Kapha, with steamed vegetables, diuretic grains and beans with hot spices like cayenne or ginger and reduction of water and juice intake.

If possible fasting from food (and water if possible) can be done for a period of three days to a week at a time. Spices and honey can be taken in the process. Generally, there should be avoidance of sugar and sweet food, dairy, oils, meat etc.

7. Dry and rough clothing and environment, what is essentially an austere life-style, like sleeping on the floor. There should be avoidance of cold and dampness but exposure to dry heat, sun and fire, and warm breezes. Use of warm and dry colors like red, orange and yellow.

8. Physical work and effort, staying up at night and not sleeping during the day.

Breaking of attachments and habits and giving up of the past should be done on a psychological level. Unnecessary possessions may be given up. Kapha types should challenge their need for comfort and try to rough it, like long hikes and camping out in nature.

9. Active meditations involving study, thinking and inquiry, reading of spiritual texts and scriptures; or else chanting out loud, dancing or singing. The mind should be stimulated, activated and well exercised, again to the point of discomfort.

Palliation therapy for Kapha is stimulating and reducing. It should not be over applied, as Kapha may require tonification. This is often more true of Kapha women.

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PURIFICATION THERAPY

Purification, Shodhana (from the root "shudh", to cleanse), is a special form of eliminating therapy. It is for elimination of the disease causing humors. It does not signify just any application of reduction methods, though most of these can be done along with it, nor can it be done without the proper preparation. Pancha Karma therapy is a system for guiding the toxins to their sites for elimination. Merely to flush out various organs or systems of the body may not be effective, if the toxins have not been directed to these sites.

Purification therapy is indicated when the aggravated humors are in the g.i. tract. If they are lodged in the tissues, waste materials of the body or Ama, the undigested food mass, they cannot be directly eliminated. Palliation methods must first be applied.

AYURVEDIC PURIFICATION THERAPY/ PANCHA KARMA

Purification therapy is said to consist of five parts, "cleansing enemas, cleansing nasal medication, purgation, emesis and blood-letting." (A.H.XIV.5). These are more commonly known as "Pancha Karma", the five cleansing actions--medicated enemas, nasal medications, therapeutic purgation, therapeutic vomiting and therapeutic release of toxic blood.

They are considered to be the most radical way to cleanse the body and thereby eliminate once and for all the disease causing humors. Purgation is the main method for eliminating Pitta; vomiting for Kapha and enemas for Vata.

These methods can be applied in acute diseases, like the use of vomiting therapy to treat acute asthma during the time of asthmatic attacks. Or the patient can be prepared to take them for internal cleansing, like the use of vomiting therapy for high Kapha constitution and a condition like obesity. The patient should have some strength to undergo Pancha Karma as the methods can be strongly reducing.

They can also be applied to prevent the humors from accumulating as part of a health maintenance and longevity promotion treatment. Moreover, they can be applied for a rejuvenation therapy. While many other systems use these methods in specific diseases Ayurveda also uses them in a broader preventative and health enhancement manner. In this way we can all derive benefit from them. They essentially reverse the disease process altogether.

Some of these methods can be used as part of other therapies. Enemas with tonic or nutritive herbs, for example, can be part of supplementation therapy, as in this manner they are being applied to build up the tissues rather than reduce the humors.

Pancha Karma is a system of several therapies and can be applied in many different ways. Its methods are varied according to the individual, the specific disease, season, culture and so on. Many of its methods, particularly in milder forms, can be used in a more general way or as part of self-care.

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PRELIMINARY PRACTICES (Purva Karma)

PREPARATION

Palliation therapy should usually be followed for a period prior to Pancha Karma. Most important is a diet that reduces our humor and which cleanses Ama. Hence light eating and the use of spices as in palliation therapy is most important.

In acute conditions, however, when a disease attack is strong, palliation therapy may only be done for shorter periods, as the humor may be ready to be eliminated, like vomiting to treat asthma. Moreover for just purposes of health enhancement such preparation is not as essential.

One week would be considered a short time for this, one month an average time, three months a long time. Yet if we are following an Ayurvedic life-regime we are essentially always practicing palliation therapy.

OLEATION AND SWEATING METHODS

Application of oils, Snehana, also called "oleation therapy" is an important therapeutic method in Ayurveda. It involves the use of oil both externally and internally.

Steam therapy or therapeutic sweating, Svedana, is another important method. It involves the application of heat or hot herbs to induce sweating.

These two are the main preliminary practises of Pancha Karma and are technically more part of palliation therapy.

After adequate detoxification and palliation methods, a period of intense daily oil application and sweating therapy should be done for at least one week for health maintenance and three weeks for treatment of severe diseases.

Warm sesame oil can be applied all over the body in large amounts and gradually rubbed in with circular gentle massage. Special medicated oils can be applied in smaller amounts to specific disease sites.

The skill in massage is not the issue here. Bodywork is an important art in itself. Oleation therapy is concerned with the application of oil, not with body massage (though good massage has a similar effect as oleation and sweating therapies). Oils should be taken internally at the same time, as outlined under palliation therapy; sesame oil or ghee for Vata, ghee for Pitta and mustard or flaxseed oil for Kapha.

The oils help loosen and liquify the toxins and humors in the skin and blood (the outer disease pathway). In this way they can be drained from the deeper tissues (the central disease pathway) and begin to flow into the g.i. tract.

Oil massage is a useful treatment in itself for arthritis, insomnia, nervous exhaustion, paralysis, tremors, convulsions, dry cough, constipation and other such mainly Vata disorders.

Sweating is then done shortly thereafter with a sweat box or with the steam of diaphoretic herbs as per one's constitution under palliation therapy. Hot baths, hot showers, saunas and hot tubs can be employed when a sweat box is not available. Usually a hot shower follows oil massage to remove the oil.

For Vata types adequate fluid should be taken before sweating. This includes lemon or lime juice with a little salt or other sour juices. This prevents against dehydration and excess sweating. Kapha types can take spices like dry ginger or the formula Trikatu with honey to encourage stronger sweating. Pitta types often do well with teas of burdock root, dandelion or red clover to aid in cleansing of the blood, or astringents like hibiscus flowers to prevent excessive sweating or heat build up.

Herbs can be decocted over a low flame in a pressure cooker, to which a hose is added to the top (this is called "nadi sveda"). The medicated steam can then be applied to more specific sites in the body, like swollen joints in arthritis. Many herbs can be used in this way including aromatic channel clearing herbs like eucalyptus, cinnamon, camphor, calamus or sage or the Ayurvedic tonic Dashamula, the ten roots as well as other such emollient tonics like ashwagandha, shatavari, bala, comfrey root or marshmallow.

The steam will be hot and slight burning of the patient's skin is alright. We should make sure, however, that the patient understands this or they may feel hurt by the treatment. It is important that the toxins be burnt up and the circulation in these local sites strongly stimulated.

Stimulation of sweating also helps further dissolve and liquify the toxins. It improves peripheral circulation and helps open the channels to allow the outer disease pathway to be flushed. Thereby it also relieves muscle tension and helps cleanse and reduce the fat tissue (sweat as the waste material of fat). The toxins loosened by the oil are moved out by sweating and are enabled to return to the g.i. tract.

By itself sweating therapy is an effective method for treating colds, flus, asthma, bronchitis, sinus congestion, sinus headaches, hay fever and other such disorders of the lung system. It is particularly useful for Kapha. It is useful for most channel blockage disorders including arthritis and gout.

In such instances it does not require previous oleation therapy. Kapha, in particular, can do well with sweating therapy without oleation. Vata can do well with oleation therapy without sweating. Generally, however, any strong or heavy application of oils should be followed by sweating therapy as oil is heavy and can accumulate and clog the channels otherwise.

Hence oil and sweating therapies are not the whole of Pancha Karma or even the primary part of it, but only the main preliminary practice. They help move the toxins through the outer to the inner

disease pathway, the gastro-intestinal tract for their elimination via the direct methods of Pancha Karma. They do, however, take more time than the primary practises. Much of Pancha Karma therapy is in preparing the toxins for elimination. This is mainly through oil and sweating therapies. The actual elimination methods can be done quickly once the preparation is made and may only take a few days.

If one stops with these preliminary practices, however, one has not actually done Pancha Karma, one has merely brought the aggravated humors back to their site of accumulation. This may cause distress and disease if they are not in some way eliminated. They can be reabsorbed and go back to the tissues where they were lodged.

If Vata is brought out through these methods but not eliminated through the primary therapeutic measures of Pancha Karma, like enema treatment, it may cause variable appetite, gas, distention, constipation and insomnia. If Pitta is brought out and not eliminated it may cause irritability, fever and hyperacidity. If Kapha is brought out, it may cause loss of appetite, tiredness and congestion.

Heavy application of oils, moreover, may depress the digestive fire and cause various digestive disorders like loss of appetite or constipation. Hence it should not be done excessively or it should be balanced out by taking herbs to improve the digestive fire, like ginger, cardamom, fennel or the Trikatu formula.

It should be noted that much of the same effect of short period intense oil massage can be gained by mild daily application of oils over a long period of time. Mild sweating methods or the taking of diaphoretic and expectorant herbs like ginger, calamus or cinnamon over a period of time can also sometimes work like the stronger sweating methods.

Yet even in this case, the five major cleansing actions, like enemas or purgation, should be done occasionally to make sure the humors are not accumulating. They can be done yearly or seasonally as part of a health maintenance program.

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PRIMARY PRACTICES (Pradhana Karma)

THERAPEUTIC VOMITING (Vamana)

Artificially induced vomiting should be approached with care. If we overly strain ourselves to vomit we can damage our nerve reflexes. Hence it is usually contraindicated for Vata types. For this reason many practitioners are afraid of it and it may have more legal risks than the other therapies.

However, it is possible to learn to do it for ourselves. It just takes a little patience and practice. It can even be done on a regular basis to cleanse the stomach and can be used sometimes as part of palliation therapy and can help remove Ama from the system.

METHOD

Strong teas of licorice, calamus, camomile or lobelia can be used, with an ounce of one of these herbs cooked in two cups of water. Or a similar amount of salt water can be taken with one or two tablespoons per cup of warm water. These herbs are emetic, promote vomiting.

Vomiting should not be done on a full stomach or after eating. It is best done in the morning, after sunrise, at Kapha time. Kapha increasing food like sugars, dairy and cheese may be taken a day or two before treatment, particularly the previous night, to provoke Kapha.

A mild carminative tea like mint or fennel should be taken first in amounts of one or two cups. Two teaspoons of the herbs can be infused per cup of water. One should drink these and then, after a few minutes, take one cup of the emetic tea. If one feels a little nauseous one should then apply a finger to the throat and attempt to vomit. Otherwise a second cup of the emetic tea should then be taken before attempting. It may take some time to master this process and more tea may have to be taken at first.

It is important to empty the stomach thoroughly. Once the vomiting reflex arises one should follow it out all the way. It is easier to empty the stomach through one or two strong reflexes than through a series of weak ones. It is also less likely to produce side effects.

Therapeutic vomiting is contraindicated for the weak, emaciated, anorexic, young, old, convalescent, and for those suffering from dry cough or constipation. It is mainly for those suffering from congestion of phlegm in the lungs and stomach.

Its best season is spring, when Kapha (phlegm) is undergoing provocation, particularly late spring when the weather has warmed up. It should not be done during cold, stormy or rainy weather if possible. It also gives better results if done around the time of the full moon (as the water element is high at this time also).

It can be used to treat asthma, bronchitis, swollen glands, epilepsy, diabetes (initial or acute phase), obesity, sinusitis, allergies, bleeding from the lower orifices and other primarily Kapha disorders. It is even good for lack of taste or appetite, slow metabolism or migraine headaches.

Much of the effect of short term emetic therapy can be gained through the long term usage of expectorant herbs, like ginger, cardamom and calamus, formulas like Trikatu, and through following an anti-Kapha and mucus reducing diet.

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PURGATION

Purgation (Virechana), is the simplest of the Pancha Karma methods and it is easy to see its effect. Apart from its usage as part of a whole Pancha Karma program, it is an important therapeutic method to treat many conditions.

A strong purgative is given like rhubarb, senna, aloe or castor oil. Four parts rhubarb root can be mixed with one part each fennel, ginger and licorice and taken 2-5 gms. before sleep with honey or warm water. Or two teaspoons of castor oil can be taken in warm milk with a half-teaspoon of dry ginger.

Triphala, the famous mild Ayurvedic purgative, can only be strong enough if given in large doses, usually 10-30 gms. It is important that the purgative be strong enough. On the other hand it should not be so strong as to weaken the patient.

Purgation is used to eliminate high Pitta from its site in the liver, gall bladder and small intestine. Note that purgation is not so much for treating the large intestine. This is because strong purgatives cleanse the small and large intestine both. Bitter purgatives like rhubarb, senna or aloe, also cleanse the liver and gall bladder. They decongest the bile and remove obstructions to its flow. They are the preferable type of purgatives for most Pitta disorders and for liver disorders like gall stones. They cleanse the small intestine through the large intestine.

This cleansing of the small intestine can weaken the digestive fire and so it is not always advisable in Vata types. As Kapha types can also have too much bile or congestion of it via too much phlegm and fat, they can also benefit much from purgation therapy.

Purgation therapy can be used whenever we need to cleanse the intestines. It can treat constipation, intestinal obstruction, old fevers, acute diarrhea, dysentery, food poisoning, gall stones, kidney stones, boils, carbuncles or any of the diseases of excess bile and toxic blood.

Purgative herbs are usually given in the evening, so that around five movements occur the next day, flushing out the intestines. The stool may be loose but if much cramping or griping occurs more herbs like cardamom or fennel should be given along with the purgative. Purgation can be done for two or three days in a row in more severe conditions.

Late spring and summer are the best seasons, though mild or short term use of purgative therapy can be applied as needed. It should be followed by hot spices for the digestive fire like ginger, asafoetida or Trikatu, particularly in the winter or if the appetite does not return after the treatment.

Purgation therapy is contraindicated for the very young, the

very old, the weak, debilitated, emaciated, pregnant or those suffering from chronic diarrhea. It should also not be done during menstruation or immediately before. Whenever there is any bleeding from the lower orifices it should be done with care, though it may be used to treat bleeding from the upper orifices. Cases of hemorrhoids or prolapse of the stomach or uterus may also be aggravated by it.

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CLEANSING ENEMAS

Enemas (basti) are a mild therapy and can be used for many conditions. There are many different kinds of enemas, some which are useful for tonification, others for reduction.

"Cleansing enemas" (Niruha basti) are used in Pancha Karma to dispel high Vata from its site in the large intestine. They are made with decoctions of anti-Vata herbs. Tonifying or building enemas, strictly speaking, are not Pancha Karma but they are often given after the cleansing enemas as part of the follow up practises and rejuvenation. We will cover them more under supplementation therapy.

A typical cleansing enema can be made with herbs like calamus, fennel and ginger, along with 1-2 tsps. rock salt and up to 1/2 cup of sesame oil per quart of normal decoction. Without the addition of the oil or demulcent herbs like licorice, cleansing enemas can be too drying and depleting. It is often best to follow them with an oil enema; for example, half a cup of sesame oil in half a cup of warm water.

Enemas can be used to treat chronic constipation, colitis, arthritis, epilepsy, paralysis, anxiety, neurosis, insomnia, sciatica, lower back pain, kidney disorders, neuralgia and other mainly Vata disorders.

They are safer and milder than purgation or vomiting and are not under such restrictions. Generally they are better done in the summer or early fall. They are contraindicated for severe debility, as well as for conditions more appropriately treated by the other methods. Their cleansing action, however, is more limited. For this reason purgation is sometimes used on Vata types when they have more strength.

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NASAL APPLICATION OF HERBS

Ayurveda administers a whole variety of herbal preparations, including decoctions, oils, ghee and smoking of herbs for direct

action on the nasal passage. This is called "Nasya", literally, "what relates to the nose" in Sanskrit. For the purification action of Pancha Karma, cleansing herbs are given through the nose, either as snuffs, decoctions or oils. Good herbs include calamus, cloves, bayberry, sage, basil, gotu kola.

Calamus, bayberry, sage or ginger powder can be snuffed to clear the sinuses. Calamus or gotu kola oil or ghee can be applied in drops to cleanse or nourish the brain. Herbs like cloves, calamus and bayberry can be smoked to cleanse the nasal passages.

Nasya is useful for many Vata and Kapha disorders but can also be used in Pitta conditions. It allows for direct action on Prana and the brain. It has strong decongestion action and allows a more specific application of expectorant herbs. It is helpful in most diseases of the head and nasal passages.

Massage of oil to the head and face, along with inhalation of steam are useful to help dislodge the toxins and make the nasal treatment more effective. This is a more local form of oil and steam therapy, which is the preliminary treatment for Nasya.

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THERAPEUTIC RELEASE OF TOXIC BLOOD

For proper application of blood-releasing therapy, toxic blood is taken out of various sites in the body, usually along the back. The blood should be dark or purplish in color. Once it becomes bright red, the treatment should stop. The amount taken out is generally from two to eight ounces.

Sometimes it is enough just to prick various sensitive sites in the body, like on the eyebrow to relieve headaches or eye inflammation.

Some people recommend donating of blood instead. While this does aid in new blood formation, it may not always be the toxic blood that is eliminated.

This therapeutic bleeding therapy is not used as much in Pancha Karma as it once was but it is still common in all systems of oriental medicines. The use of strong alterative herbs like manjishta, katuka, turmeric or burdock can have the same effect over a long period of time.

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FOLLOW UP PRACTICES (Uttara Karma)

Pancha Karma treatment has several follow up practices. It is not an isolated therapy that can be done once and forgotten but must be integrated into one's life-regime.

First, it may be necessary to repeat the whole process of Pancha Karma. It may take more than one session to cleanse deep seated toxins, particularly if shortened versions of Pancha Karma are followed, like week long sessions or less. It may be repeated after one to three months. Often it is good to do it every year.

Second, after Pancha Karma we should return to a diet and life-style in harmony with our constitution, or establish one if we have not done so already. Pancha Karma is meant to allow us to more effectively implement our life regimes, not to substitute for them. If we follow Pancha Karma, or any strong cleansing therapy for that matter, with a return to bad habits we may make our condition worse by suppressing the healing energy of our body renewed through it. The toxins may be able to enter more directly into the cleansed tissue and go to a deeper layer where they can cause more difficult diseases.

Most important, if the treatment has been successful, we should be ready for a higher form of tonification therapy. Having eliminated the disease causing humors we can now rebuild our tissues damaged by disease on a new level of purity and strength.

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REJUVENATION

Rejuvenation (Rasayana) is a special form of tonification therapy. Properly speaking, it follows deep cleansing like Pancha Karma and the elimination of the excess humors from the body because real renewal is only possible once the factors of decay have been taken away. Hence, though many of its methods are the same, it is different from general tonification therapy which can be given in any debilitated condition, even before or without Pancha Karma. We will cover Rejuvenation under Tonification Therapy.

Hence Pancha Karma begins with palliation therapy and ends with tonification therapy. It encompasses in its scope the main methods of Ayurveda. It is thus something like the central pillar of Ayurveda.

It was traditionally done in a clinical setting with the amounts of the dispelled humors carefully measured. As a clinical method it requires some special study and preparation. Not all Ayurvedic practitioners will want to do it themselves, though we will find some of its practises or reduced forms to be generally useful. Many Ayurvedic doctors in India do not do it and it is not, unfortunately, widely practiced anywhere there. However, we should be able to recommend someone for our patients to go to if necessary. For this reason Pancha Karma centers are an important part of future Ayurvedic health care in this country. We also need to adapt its methods to our cultural situation and the substances we have available so much work on it still needs to be done. We cannot just apply it in the old Indian way.

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TONIFICATION THERAPY

INDICATIONS

Tonification or supplementation therapy is indicated for the elderly, for pregnant women, for women who have just given birth, for young children, for the debilitated, emaciated, convalescent, in anemia, wasting diseases, malnutrition, most conditions of sexual debility, impotence or infertility and in states of nerve weakness, emotional collapse, chronic insomnia or nervous exhaustion. A certain amount of it is helpful for vegetarians or those who do strong physical or mental work, or whenever additional nutrition may be required.

Tonification therapy is the primary therapy for Vata types and Vata conditions, as Vata is essentially a catabolic force that brings about tissue depletion. It is also useful for many Pitta conditions. Such Pitta conditions as fever, bleeding, hepatitis, ulcers etc. can in time bring us to a state of severe deficiency, largely through high Pitta burning out our tissues. It may even be useful in Kapha conditions. Though Kapha types tend towards excess, it is often in such tissues as fat. Deficiency of blood, reproductive tissue or nerve tissue may result from the clogging effect of Kapha. Hence some tonification of such tissues may be necessary for Kapha types when they are run down or debilitated, as in chronic conditions of asthma or arthritis.

APPLICATION

The main season for supplementation therapy is the fall, when the dryness and lightness of Vata prevails. It is also useful in the winter when we need more strength and weight and can digest heavier foods. It is less useful in the summer as its heavy and oily nature can increase toxins in the body. It can also do this to some extent in the late spring when our toxins tend to liquify.

Yet it can be initiated any time when severe debility exists. Its usage is more constitutional than seasonal and it often has to be continued for a period of months or, sometimes, years. Generally the older we get, the more of it we need, particularly after the age of fifty.

Most of us require a certain degree of supplementation or oleation therapy particularly in the late fall. It helps gives us the vigor to endure the vicissitudes of winter. It is particularly useful in cold climates or when we will be doing outdoor work and exercise in the cold.

Supplementation therapy is generally contraindicated in Ama conditions (where an undigested food mass exists, evidenced by thick tongue coating), for the obese, in acute diseases, during colds or flus, congestive disorders, fevers or infectious diseases. It should be applied with care when allergies exist or allergic diseases like arthritis. As tonic foods and herbs may be hard to digest by their heavy nature the state of the digestive fire must always be considered.

METHODS OF SUPPLEMENTATION

Methods of supplementation are described as nourishing the body with "meat, milk, raw sugar, ghee and honey, with oil enemas; by sleeping and resting freely, by oil massage, by baths and by comfortable life-style." (Ashtanga Hridaya XIV. 9-10)

The main method, then, is dietary; rich, nutritive food, along with strong, tonic herbs, mild but oily massage, rest and relaxation. Tonic substances are usually sweet or pleasant in taste and predominate in the elements of earth and water.

Generally, work, physical and mental, should be reduced as much as possible. Worry, strain and anxiety should be set aside. The cares of the world should be given up as much as possible. One should sleep as much or whenever one likes but go to bed early. Going to bed late and sleeping late will not afford restful sleep.

Sexual activity should be reduced as much as possible and should not be done during the day. Sexual abstinence, according to the Yoga Sutras, the classical work on yoga, is the best means of gaining energy.

Breath control, breathing exercises like Pranayama or the Chinese Qi Gong also build energy in a primary way. However, moderate breath increasing exercises should be done, with no effort to stop or suppress the breath.

Stimulation, including most of our mass media entertainment, should be reduced, as these disperse our energy. We should stay at home or in a peaceful or sheltered environment and avoid crowds and noise.

Stimulant substances, like coffee or tobacco, should not be taken. All drugs should be avoided. Meditation, contemplation or study of spiritual teachings can be helpful.

It is preferable to take a vacation in nature, as in a mountain cabin or at least stay in a comfortable and peaceful place, which may be our home, for a period of time. It may not be possible for us to do all this, but tonification therapy can still be effective, if we persist in several major tonification actions over time.

If possible a patient in supplementation therapy, particularly when more severely in need of it, should have a nurse or friend to take care of their needs, to cook for them etc. Loving companionship is helpful.

Tonification is simpler than elimination therapy. While many different methods and routes of elimination exist like purgation, vomiting or sweating, tonification involves one primary method, increased nutrition. This, however, is not just a matter of eating more, other ways of increasing nutrition through different sites in the body are used in Ayurveda like the skin, nose and colon. These allow a broader tonification therapy and show the comprehensive nature of the Ayurvedic approach.

OLEATION THERAPY

Oleation therapy includes external as well as internal use of oils. In Pancha Karma (Purification Therapy) oils are applied externally to help liquify toxins, so they can be eliminated more easily. However, the body can also be nourished through the skin. The effects of such nutrients extends to the bones and nerve tissue, allowing a direct penetration into the deeper tissues. Oleation therapy, therefore, is also useful for tonification.

External application of oils bypasses the digestive tract and so many oils can be taken externally, when they would be difficult to digest internally. Good oils include sesame, almond, olive, coconut and avocado and various special medicated sesame oils. Again, as mentioned previously, care must still be taken as externally oils will still tend to depress the digestive fire and the other fires of the body (like Bhrajaka Pitta which imparts lustre to the skin). For long term tonification large amounts of oils should not be applied daily (1/4 cup externally is usually adequate).

INTERNAL USE OF OILS

Oils are the main substance for tonification internally as well. We can add such oils to our diet as ghee, butter, sesame oil or various animal fats and meat broths.

Warm milk with a teaspoon or two of ghee and spices like ginger or saffron is good for this purpose.

TONIFYING ENEMAS

Oils can be taken internally in the form of enemas. Generally, it is safe for Vata types to take 1/2 cup of warm sesame oil in the rectum in the evening (and preferably hold it until morning) as part of tonification therapy.

Tonic herbs can be taken this way also. Tonics like ashwagandha, shatavari or licorice can be made into decoctions and taken rectally, including milk decoctions. Five grams of such herbs can be taken per cup of milk or water along with a gram of a spicy herb like calamus and a teaspoon or tea of ghee or sesame oil. Usually a cup or two at a time is sufficient. Milk or meat and bone soups can be taken this way as well. These enemas should be taken slightly warm and retained as along as possible.

Such treatments are particularly good for severe sexual debility, weak kidneys or severe anorexia.

TONIFYING NASAL MEDICATIONS

Tonic substances can also be taken in through the nose. Ghee, sesame oil or herbs to nourish the brain, like gotu kola, calamus or licorice can be taken this way, particularly in the form of medicated oils and ghees. Calamus ghee is best.

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TONIFICATION FOR THE HUMORS

VATA

Vata requires a strong and typical tonification therapy, like palliation therapy but more strengthening. As much rest and sleep as desired is allowed. Mild oil massage can be given but too heavy oil application should not be done. Warm baths are good, particularly salt or mineral baths, but sweating therapy should not be done (it may have a dispersing and weakening effect in cases of severe debility). Nutritive enemas should be given with only occasional cleansing enemas to keep the system from clogging. Exercise should be avoided, as well as exposure to the elements, except sunbathing.

Foods include whole grains like wheat, rice and oats, mung beans, root vegetables, dairy products, nuts and possibly eggs and meat, along with oils, salt and spices; the richer side of the anti-Vata diet. It is often best to start out with a bland diet like Kicharee (equal parts rice and split mung). One should aim towards a rich diet with frequent meals. However, one should not take so many heavy foods so as to cause nausea.

Good tonic herbs include ashwagandha, ginseng, guggul, kapikacchu, bala, shatavari, marshmallow, comfrey root, astragalus, licorice and the Triphala formula, along with spices like ginger, cinnamon, cloves, long pepper; mainly sweet and pungent taste.

Four grams of ashwagandha and one gram of calamus can be taken in a cup of warm milk with a teaspoon of ghee and a teaspoon of raw sugar. This mixture can be taken once a day or up to four times a day in conditions of severe debility.

PITTA

Tonification for Pitta is milder than that for Vata. Mild massage is alright but without too much oil. Sweating therapy should also be avoided. Baths should be warm but not hot. No purgation should be given; though lubricating laxatives like psyllium can be taken for constipation if it exists. Exercise should also be avoided, as well as exposure to the elements.

Raw food should not be taken nor too many cold juices. Diet should be rich with no fasting or skipping of meals. Foods include whole grains like wheat, rice and oats, mung beans, tofu, some steamed green vegetables, sweet dairy products like milk, some sugar, no spices, a little salt; the nutritive side of the anti-Pitta diet.

Good tonic herbs include amalaki, aloe gel, shatavari, bala, gotu kola, marshmallow, comfrey root, rehmannia, licorice; mainly sweet and slightly bitter taste.

Four grams of shatavari and two grams of fennel can be taken in a cup of warm milk with a teaspoon each of ghee and raw sugar. This mixture can be taken once a day or up to four times a day in conditions of severe debility. Or one can simply take the Ayurvedic jelly Chyavan prash.

KAPHA

Tonification for Kapha involves a less nutritive and more stimulant approach than tonification generally. Massage is good but should not be too strong, only mild sweating therapy should be given, enough to warm but not so much as to weaken the patient. Purgation or vomiting should not be done. Adequate rest should be taken but no sleeping during the day. Strong exercise and exposure to the elements should be avoided except sunbathing. The mind should be exercised but not strained. Unlike palliation therapy no rigorous or harsh methods should be employed.

Raw food should not be taken, nor too much light food. Foods include whole grains like corn, barley or basmati rice, beans like mung, tofu, chick peas or lentils, but no dairy products, free use of spices, some oils including a little ghee; the nutritive side of the anti-Kapha diet. Mushrooms like shitaki can be helpful. In cases of more severe debility some oils like sesame or nuts like almonds can be taken but with adequate spices to digest them.

Good tonic herbs for Kapha include garlic, long pepper, guggul, myrrh, aloe gel (with spices), elecampane, cinnamon, ginger, shilajit; mainly pungent and only slightly sweet taste with predominately warm energy. Strong bitters should not be taken like senna, rhubarb, gentian or barberry.

Two teaspoons of aloe gel can be taken with 1/2 teaspoon fresh ginger juice and 1 teaspoon of honey. This mixture can be taken two times a day or every two or three hours in more debilitated conditions.

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REJUVENATION

Rejuvenation is supplementation therapy following deep internal cleansing or Pancha Karma. It is just tonification therapy applied in a strict manner and so in general does not different from what is given above.

For rejuvenation of the different tissues and organs, the following herbs from Ayurvedic, Western and Chinese sources can be recommended. Most important is rejuvenation of the deeper tissues and the reproductive system, as this is the main energy source for the body. Substances that do this also increase Ojas.

FOR THE TISSUES

For PLASMA---shatavari, marshmallow, comfrey root, slippery elm, irish moss

For BLOOD----amalaki (chyavan prash), shatavari, saffron (in milk decoction), turmeric ghee, tang kuei, rehmannia, lycium berries

For MUSCLE---ginseng, bala, amalaki, ashwagandha

For FAT------sesame oil, ghee (these with tonic herbs like ashwagandha or bala)

For BONE-----ashwagandha, comfrey root, solomon's seal, guggul, myrrh, siberian ginseng (eleuthro), coral bhasma

For MARROW---calamus ghee, gotu kola ghee, licorice, ashwagandha, haritaki, sandalwood, zizyphus seeds

For SEMEN----ashwagandha, shatavari, bala, fo ti, garlic, lotus seeds, black and white musali, saw palmetto

FOR THE ORGANS

LUNGS-----long pepper, elecampane, bibhitaki, garlic, fenugreek (these mainly in milk decoction or with demulcent herbs like shatavari or comfrey root)

HEART-----saffron, cinnamon, rose, lotus, sandalwood, ginseng, hawthorn berries, draksha (Ayurvedic grape herbal wine)

STOMACH---shatavari, marshmallow, vamsha rochana, licorice (these are mainly for the stomach lining or mucosa)

SMALL INTESTINE---ginger, cinnamon, galangal, cardamom, fennel, draksha (mainly for Agni)

LIVER-----aloe gel (with turmeric), sesame oil, ghee (particularly made with bitter herbs like barberry, turmeric or manjishta), tang kuei, rehmannia, dandelion root

SPLEEN----licorice, ginseng, bala, astragalus

COLON-----Triphala, haritaki, asafoetida, basil

KIDNEYS---shilajit, gokshura, rehmannia, fo ti, gotu kola, eclipta

BRAIN-----gotu kola, calamus, haritaki, shankha pushpi, jatamansi (these particularly as medicated ghees)

UTERUS----shatavari, aloe gel, saffron, kapikacchu, tang kuei

TESTES----ashwagandha, bala, kapikacchu, black musali

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REJUVENATION OF THE MIND

Rejuvenation of the mind (brahma rasayan) is the oldest and most important part of Ayurvedic therapy. It is very difficult and demanding to attempt. Yet if we take a week or a month to attempt it, it can be very effective. If we cannot do all of it, still the application of a part of it can be very helpful. Rejuvenation of the mind is the foundation of all other forms of rejuvenation, as the main factors that cause disease arise from the mind. It is somewhat complicated so we can only outline its main features.

According to the system of yoga, the mind is only rejuvenated in silence, when there is complete absence of thought and mental agitation. No physical or mental activity can directly bring it about but some can indirectly contribute to it. Hence silence and peace of mind is the first factor. For this we should adopt the role or the attitude of the witness or the seer, the Purusha. This may be best arrived at through a process of Self-inquiry or tracing the "I" thought back to its origin. Simple surrender to the Divine may in itself be enough.

Peace inducing mantras can be used to bring it about, like Om, Ram and Sham, chanted first aloud for a few minutes and then repeated mentally throughout the day whenever the mind begins to wander.

Pranayama is helpful and the breath must be brought to a state of equipoise and peace. We should try to connect up to the cosmic life force in this way, also through opening up to the healing force of nature. The body must be brought into stillness through right posture and we should sit most of the day or as long as we can. Any comfortable posture is good but the lotus pose or siddhasana are best if we can do them without strain.

Sexual abstinence, if possible, in thought, word and deed is essential through the duration of this process. The tendency for the mind to disperse itself by seeking outer objects of enjoyment should be curtailed as much as possible.

The digestive fire should be strong. Only sattvic foods should be eaten and nothing that can clog the channels. Fresh raw milk is good; otherwise it can be avoided. Yogurt in moderation is good. Ghee is the most important substance. Whole grains, nuts, fresh fruit and generally raw vegetables can be taken. Predominately sweet taste is used but not pure sweets or sugar, except jaggary and honey. Salty and sour articles should be avoided, as well as bitter and astringent.

The diet should be light and overeating should be avoided. Fasting can be resorted to until the appetite returns. Only pure fresh water should be taken. Sattvic spices like ginger, cinnamon, cardamom, fennel and calamus can be taken with honey to clear the channels but generally not too many spices should be used.

There should be no use of stimulants, coffee, tea, chocolate, drugs, tobacco, alcohol etc.

Sandalwood incense and sattvic oils, aromas and flowers can be used, like camphor or rose. No strong colors should be used but mild shades of blue, green or white, with some gold.

The best herb to take is gotu kola, particularly as Brahmi rasayan, gotu kola herbal jelly. Or four parts gotu kola, one part calamus, one part ashwagandha and one part licorice can be used, two teaspoons per cup of water, or taken in milk with ghee.

Usually retreat in nature is essential. Winter is often a good season as our consciousness tends to be more internalized at this time. Most preferable is the winter solstice. High mountain areas are better as the air is more clear and the ether element is more predominant. One should be on a hillside or in an open area, not in a lowland or enclosed area, as a free space for Prana to flow must be necessary.

It is important to sleep as little as possible. Sleep should not be taken during the day. Physical activity and exertion should be avoided except for short walks. Meditation should be done in the early morning (the hour of Brahma) or 4 am., also at sunrise, noon, sunset and midnight. Sleep can be taken between midnight and 4 am. or also between sunset and midnight.

Solitude is preferable during this process. One should also allow attachment to the past to be given up. Worry, anxiety, ambition and striving should be set aside. One should become like the proverbial uncarved block of Lao Tzu.

All forms of mental stimulation should be avoided, particularly mass media influences, above all loud music, as well as computers. Silence should be observed in speech. Newspapers and magazines should not be used. One should temporarily die to the world and allow oneself to be reborn in the peace of nature.

Yet all these rules are subordinate to peace and stillness of mind which is the main thing. Once that is brought about they can be modified or forgotten.

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PART III. LESSON 7

STUDY QUESTIONS

This is a long and very important section so take your time with it and the questions about it.

1. What is tonification therapy?
2. What is reduction therapy?
3. What is palliation therapy?
4. What is oleation therapy?
5. What is sweating therapy?

6. What is Pancha Karma?
7. Why should we be careful in applying vomiting therapy?
8. Why is purgation perhaps the most useful of the Pancha Karmas?
9. How is enema therapy used as a cleansing method in Ayurveda?

10. What is rejuvenation therapy?
11. Outline rejuvenation of the mind (brahma rasayan)?
12. Outline palliation therapy for Kapha?
13. Outline tonification therapy for Vata?
14. How does tonification therapy for Pitta differ from palliation therapy?
15. What are some good rejuvenative herbs for Vata and the brain?

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PART III. LESSON 8

SUBTLE HEALING MODALITIES OF AYURVEDA 1.

The main healing modalities of Ayurveda are diet and herbs. These work primarily on a gross or outer physical level. Ayurveda also has various subtle or occult healing methods. These largely work through the mind and senses and our intake of subtle impressions. We will go into four of these in this course; aroma therapy, color therapy, gem therapy and mantra (sound therapy).

1. AROMA THERAPY

Aroma therapy consists of the use of fragrances to promote the healing process. It includes the use of incense, flower essences and essential oils. It is an important part of Ayurveda and other ancient healing sciences, like that of ancient Egypt and the middle east.

It is not only helpful for the treatment of physical diseases, it is also useful for treating psychological (emotional) and psychic (spiritual) disorders. In addition it aids in meditation, health maintenance, disease prevention, longevity and rejuvenation. Many aromatic oils strengthen the immune system and Ojas and help treat chronic fever and infections and ward off contagious diseases.

Aromatic oils help clear and cleanse both the mind and life-force. They cleanse and open the channels and chakras, clear and strengthen the aura. They help clear pathogens from the air or the bodily systems, remove negative emotions and attitu;des from the mind, and build sattva, the purity and clarity of our organic nature. Aromatic oils themselves contain a portion of the cosmic life-force (prana) and serve to nourish and energize that within us.

SOURCES OF AROMATIC OILS

Aromas or fragrances are derived from the essential oils of various flowers, resins or aromatic plants--

FLOWERS

Almost any fragrant flower has a use in aroma therapy. Many common garden flowers like rose, lily, gardenia, honeysuckle, jasmine and iris are used in this way.

Flowers are a recent part of nature to evolve. They parallel the evolution of mammals and reflect the entrance of the soul into the creation. Many have evolved under human cultivation. Hence they carry a greater power of the soul (purusha) within them and aid in its unfoldment.

Embodying color they serve to soothe the eyes and promote perception. They awaken creative imagination and the power of vision and visualization. They bring the astral light into the physical world and with it the essential beauty, power and delight of life. They communicate the bliss (ananda) of the Divine. They aid in the opening of the heart and the unfoldment of devotion. They also cleanse the blood and disperse toxins.

We should keep such flowers around us or in our healing environment. We should pick them regularly and place them in a prominent place or on our altars.

RESINS

Many tree resins are aromatic and produce a fragrant smoke when placed on a hot coal. Such are myrrh, frankincense and the resins of most pines.

Such resins are secreted by the tree to heal wounds or damage to the bark. They also therefore can work to heal damage to our bones, flesh and skin. By their elastic and sticky nature they are particularly good for our tendons and ligaments.

More generally they serve to strengthen our defensive energy (immune system), cleanse the blood and subtle channels, relieve pain and promote healing of tissues.

They also have strong cleansing and antiseptic properties for both body and mind and aid in the promotion of longevity. They give firmness, strength, stability and yet flexibility and afford both power and consistency in movement on both physical and psychological levels.

HERBS

Many plants themselves are aromatic or contain aromatic oils in their different parts. This includes all spices and most herbs of pungent taste, which contain essential oils useful in aroma therapy. Here we find such herbaceous plants like mint or sage, aromatic bushes like rosemary or lavender, aromatic grasses like lemon grass or vetiverian, aromatic roots like ginger and turmeric, and aromatic barks like cinnamon or sandalwood.

These oils often have a protective affect upon the plant from damage by insects, for example. Hence many of them also have antiseptic, antibiotic and cleansing properties. They are good sources of negative ions. They usually have circulation promoting and channel clearing properties and improve energy. Their stimulating property awakens the mind and affords for greater acuity of perception.

USAGE

Aromatic oils are applied externally but can also be taken internally in the form of special preparations. One should NEVER take the essential oil of a plant internally. A teaspoon of almost any essential oil, even mint, is enough to burn a hole in the stomach and can be fatal. Essential oils are volatile and irritant and are destructive of the mucus membranes. They should never be placed directly on the mucus membranes or into the eyes.

Externally, aromatic oils can be placed on various sensitive sites or orifices on the body. Most of these are on the head, like the third eye, the top of the head (site of the crown chakra), the temples (for headaches), the root of the nose (for sinus problems), behind the ears, on the neck etc., where they can be easily smelled.

One may just place a drop of the oil on the back of one's hand or wrist and smell it periodically. The pure oil itself can be used or as diluted with alcohol, water or a heavier oil, like coconut or sesame oils. The powder of the herb may be mixed with water and applied as a paste, like sandalwood paste to the third eye.

Other important points are the heart, particularly direct center of the chest or the center of the upper back opposite it, in the region of the chest (for lung disorders), the solar plexus (for digestive disorders or to strengthen the will), the navel, and the point of the sex center below the navel (for sexual debility). Here we do not smell them as directly. Their placement is to affect various organs, systems or chakras of the body on a subtle level by their penetrating nature.

Aromatic oils can be made into incense. Those which are tree resins or barks, also some branches (like cedar, juniper or sagebrush) can be burned directly or indirectly (as on charcoal) as incense. We can directly inhale the incense for stronger effect or just use it to purify and beautify our air and environment. The residue from the incense creates a protective film on a subtle level.

Some of these herbs can be specially burnt on different sites of the body. This is the common method of moxibustion in Chinese medicine, which uses mugwort in this way, usually burnt on a slice of fresh ginger. Ayurveda uses turmeric and calamus in a similar way. The essential oil of the plant is able to penetrate by the power of the heat. In this way many of the sensitive or marma points of the body can be stimulated, like the points of the chakras.

Internally, oils must be taken in a properly diluted form. Essential oils can be taken as herbal teas as they are usually soluble in water infusions. Flower essences are also soluble in water this way. They can also be made into tinctures, of which 10-30 drops can be taken in a cup of water.

Taken internally, their action is to stimulate subtle processes of the organism from within. For this it is often best to taste them and hold them in our mouths a minute before swallowing them. In this way they can work directly on the Prana or life-force in the head, just as when they are inhaled.

Aromatic oils and spices in Ayurveda are often used as part of steam or sweating therapy.

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NATURE OF AROMATIC OILS

Aromatic substances generally have a balancing affect upon the mind and are sattvic in nature. They aid in the balance of the three humors, and of Vata, Tejas and Prana.

They are light, soothing and cleansing and abound in the element of ether. Though gross fragrance is the sensory quality that belongs to the earth element, these subtle aromas belong to the subtler elements and contain, according to their specific nature, fire, air or ether and serve to transmit or stimulate powers of sight, touch or hearing.

In excess some can aggravate the humors (in this regard less so than taking the gross forms of the herbs). Those which are very dry or light and strong smelling can aggravate Vata; those which are hot and spicy can aggravate Pitta; those which are cool and sweet can aggravate Kapha.

Aromatic oils help counter negative bacteria and more specifically, viruses, and generally remove stagnant air. They also help clear out negative emotions, astral pathogens (including negative thoughts from others) from the aura or psychic environment. They contain large amounts of Prana, the cosmic life-force, and thereby stimulate the energy of healing on all levels. Hence they are useful also for health maintenance, disease prevention and care of the mind and emotions.

Fragrances stimulate and gladden the heart. On a physical level they improve circulation and allow for ease of movement. They increase positive emotions like love, joy and happiness and strengthen our motivation, determination and creativity in life. They open the mind and senses and improve our capacity for reception, perception and discrimination.

As aromas work primarily on Prana, they stimulate the life-force in the body. As all disease involves some disturbance or obstruction in the life-force, through the Prana they can treat all diseases. They serve as catalytic agents to promote the right movement of the life-force.

FLOWER FRAGRANCES AND SPICY OILS

Aromatic oils are of essentially two basic types; flower fragrances and spicy oils.

Flower fragrances are usually sweet in taste and post-digestive effect and cooling in energy. Some are bitter-sweet, like jasmine or chrysanthemum. They decrease Pitta and Vata but in excess can increase Kapha. They elevate the emotions and both calm and gladden the heart. They help open the heart chakra. They increase Ojas, the underlying energy reserve of the body and mind.

They are an important part of anti-Pitta therapy as they reduce such emotions as irritability and anger and clear heat and fire from the head. Many of them help strengthen the immune system and in their cleansing action to the air have natural anti-biotic and anti-fever properties.

Spicy oils, like cinnamon or musk, are usually pungent in taste and post-digestive effect and warming in energy. They decrease Kapha and Vata but can increase Pitta. They help clear the head, sinuses and lungs. The stimulate the mind and senses and increase Tejas, clarity and power of perception. They help improve nerve function and many are analgesic (stop pain), like camphor. They help open the third eye center. They help activate both the circulatory and digestive systems and clear the channels. They are an important part of anti-Kapha therapy.

Those which are purely pungent, like camphor or sage are best for Kapha. Those which are pungent and sweet like cinnamon, ginger or cardamom are better for Vata.

Some bitter spicy oils also exist, like wormwood, vetivert and henna. They are good for Pitta and often possess refrigerant (strongly cooling) properties.

As fragrant oils are light and strong in smell, in excess they can aggravate Vata. They can cause feelings of lightheadedness, ungroundedness and hypersensitivity. Hence though they are generally all good for Vata, it is only in the right dosage, one that is not too high.

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IMPORTANT OILS

Generally the aromatic oils of plants do the same thing as the plant itself. Hence most of the information given on these plants as in THE YOGA OF HERBS is applicable here also. In aroma therapy their preparation and manner of taking is different and their application is on a more subtle level, but this does not serve to alter their essential nature.

AJWAN: Ajwan, a kind of wild celery seeds from India, is pungent and hot. It is stimulating, diaphoretic, aphrodisiac and antirheumatic, particularly good for Vata. It can be used as a spice or a tea or as part of steam therapy.

ALMOND: Here we are referring to the essential oil from the almond, not its heavy or fatty oil. It is bitter, sweet and warm. It strengthens the lungs and nerves and reduces Vata. It is good for cough and also helps dissolve congestion and tumors.

ALOES WOOD: Also called 'Agaru' or 'Aquilaria' this is an important incense and fragrance in the orient, second only to sandalwood. Aloes wood is pungent, sweet and warm. It is stimulant, aphrodisiac and analgesic and has good restorative properties for the kidneys, bones and reproductive system.

BASIL: Basil is pungent and warm. It cleanses the mind, nerves and senses and purifies the air. It counters fever, clears phlegm, and has good antiviral action. It also cleanses the large intestine and removes apana, the negative or downward moving life-force. It increases devotion and gives space.

It is good to have holy basil (tulsi) plant in our house or healing area for maintaining the purity of our psychic environment.

CALAMUS: Calamus is pungent, bitter and warm. It cleanses the subtle channels of the mind and nervous system. It improves the senses, particularly hearing, and strengthens and regenerates our power of speech. Inwardly it increases intelligence and wisdom and strengthens Tejas, the fire of the mind and affords perception of the inner Self. It helps us let go of the past and helps ward of ghosts and other negative entities. It is useful in exorcism and helps stop possession by various entities, including the gods. For this it can be burned and the smoke (which is not that pleasant in smell) allowed to fill the room.

CAMPHOR: Camphor is pungent, hot and stimulating. It strongly opens the mind, senses and lungs and increases our powers of perception and meditation. It is very cleansing, antiparasitical and antiseptic. It is strongly analgesic, as for headaches or arthritic pain. It is an important incense for Puja and helps allow the subtle energies of spiritual rituals to enter into the mind. It energizes the power of Shiva (pure consciousness).

The natural resin should not be taken internally in amounts more than one gram at a time.

CARDAMOM: Cardamom is pungent, sweet and warm. It stimulates the mind and heart, the digestion and circulation. It gives joy, delight and creativity and helps counter dullness and depression. It is good during pregnancy for its harmonizing effect.

CEDAR: What is often called cedar botanically is really juniper. It is pungent, bitter, sweet and warm, stimulating, cleansing and antiseptic. It is good for arthritis, edema and diabetes.

Juniper branches can also be burned to clear the air. Juniper is one of the most common bushes in nature and also in ornamental gardening, so one can usually be found not far away.

CINNAMON: Cinnamon is pungent, sweet and warm. It is stimulating and promotes circulation and relieves pain. It strengthens the heart, the muscles and improves fertility and sexual function. It gives strength and empowers the will.

CLOVES: Cloves is pungent and warm. It is stimulating, expectorant and analgesic, and mildly aphrodisiac. It awakens the senses and has a decongestant action. It makes us more joyful and lively.

EUCALYPTUS: Eucalyptus is pungent, warm and stimulating, much like camphor. It opens the mind, senses and lungs and is both analgesic and antiseptic. It is good for phlegm, stagnation, putrefication and depression. It cleanses the psychic air.

FRANKINCENSE: Frankincense, like its relative myrrh, is very cleansing to the blood and to the nerves, the head and heart. It relieves pain and strengthens the joints. It calms the mind, increases faith and promotes purity, virtue, detachment and devotion. It is pungent, astringent, bitter, sweet and warm.

GARDENIA: Gardenia is sweet, bitter and cool. It cleanses the blood, liver, kidneys and heart and counters infection and fevers of all kinds. It is similar to jasmine but milder as an aphrodisiac for the female. It is good for uterine infections.

GARLIC: Garlic is pungent, hot and unpleasant. It is an important oil by itself for its antibiotic and antiseptic properties. Hence it is only used for acute conditions and not as a fragrance. It can have a grounding affect if taken or inhaled in conditions of hysteria, fright or convulsions. It is said to help ward off negative entities but is also said to repel the gods.

GINGER: We can press out the juice of fresh ginger root and obtain a high percentage of the oil. It is pungent, sweet and warm. It is a good stimulant and analgesic for colds, flus, head pain, lung congestion and joint and muscle pain. It also helps improve the pulse and strengthen the appetite. Dry ginger can be used this way as a paste. Ginger promotes joy, happiness and creativity. The flower fragrance can also be used.

GUGGUL: This Ayurvedic resin much like myrrh has similar properties. It is not quite as specific to the female reproduc;tive system but is generally better for the nerves. It balances Vata in the deeper tissues for bone, marrow and semen.

HEENA: This is a special warming oil from India. It is good for Kapha and Vata but can increase Pitta. It promotes perception and clarity of mind and is good for the Third Eye.

HONEYSUCKLE: Honeysuckle is sweet, bitter and cool. It cleanses the blood and plasma and strengthens the lungs. It is good for colds, flus and more contagious type influenza. It is refrigerant and good for heatstroke, sunstroke or insomnia and purifies and cools the brain.

IRIS: Iris is sweet, bitter and cool. It cleanses the blood, liver and lymphatics, is laxative, counters infections, and helps counter negative emotions like jealousy, envy, anger and hatred.

JASMINE: Jasmine is sweet, bitter and a little warm. It strengthens the female reproductive system and makes the female more attractive and alluring. For this reason it may have a warming action on the male. It is clearing, cleansing and antitumor in action and good for breast or uterine infections or cancer. It purifies the mind and emotions.

LAVENDER: Lavender is pungent, sweet and cool. It calms the emotions and soothes the nerves. It promotes contentment and is good for women, as in P.M.S. and for agitated children. It is particularly good for Vata.

LEMON BALM: Lemon balm is pungent, sour, sweet and cool. It is calming and relaxing. It is a good refrigerant for fevers, also good for calming children.

LEMON GRASS: Lemon grass is pungent, sour and cool. It is diuretic, expectorant and refrigerant. It aids in the cleansing of the lungs and kidneys.

LILY: Lily is sweet and cool. It calms the heart, soothes the nerves, harmonizes the emotions and is good for irritability, anxiety and insomnia. It counters dry cough and nurtures the lungs and stomach. It increases faith, devotion, virtue and purity and gives us contentment.

LOTUS: Lotus is sweet, a little bitter and cool. It calms the mind and heart, and promotes deep sleep or meditation. It increases love, faith, devotion and compassion and helps build Ojas. It strengthens the reproductive system and the nerves.

MINT: Mint as an oil is menthol, which is derived from a number of mints. It is pungent, cool and stimulating. It clears the mind and the head, disperses heaviness and dullness and increases lightness and motility.

Peppermint has more stimulating properties on digestion and circulation. Spearmint is more calming and relaxing, Catnip is moreso yet and aids in relaxation and sleep.

MUGWORT: Mugwort is bitter and slightly warm. It helps warm and clear the channels, particularly as burnt on sensitive points on the body, like the hara (the point of the sex center a few inches below the navel). It eases menstruation and helps prevent miscarriage.

MUSK: Musk is pungent, hot, stimulating and aphrodisiac. It can be used to revive patients in coma or near collapse situations. It invigorates the heart, strengthens the reproductive system and awakens the senses. It is the most yang or fiery of the fragrances and can have a rajasic effect.

MYRRH: Myrrh is pungent, bitter, astringent, sweet and slightly warm. It is very cleansing to the blood, counters infection and putrefication and is good for tumors. It strengthens the bones and the nerves and helps reduce excess fat. It promotes the healing of tissues, as after traumatic injuries or post-surgery. It strengthens the heart and the uterus.

PATCHOULI: Patchouli is pungent and warm. It is stimulant, diaphoretic and expectorant. It cleanses the digestive system and stimulates the senses and promotes joy and activity. It is particularly good for Kapha.

PENNYROYAL: Pennyroyal is spicy and a little warm. Oil of pennyroyal is a strong emmenagogue (promotes menstruation) and clears the emotions. It is also antiseptic and wards off insects. It cleanses the lungs, clears the liver and improves peripheral circulation.

PLUMERIA: This is the main flower used in the making of leis in Hawaii, also called 'frangipani' and a common tropical flowering tree. It is sweet, spicy and cool and counters heat, infection and agitation. It clears the mind, calms the emotions and gives balance and harmony to the psyche. It promotes psychological clarity.

PRICKLY ASH: Prickly ash is pungent, bitter and warm. It is stimulating and analgesic. Its oil is good for treating pain, including tootheache, facial nerve pain and arthritis.

ROSE: Rose is the flower of the heart. It is sweet and cool and is refrigerant and alterative. It cools and cleanses the eyes, for which rose water is excellent. It increases love, compassion and devotion. It has a balancing and nurturing effect upon the female reproductive system.

ROSEMARY: Rosemary is pungent, bitter and cool. It fortifies the heart, stimulates the circulation of the blood and is good for relieving headaches. It promotes menstruation and eases emotional tension.

SAFFRON: Saffron is one of the most important fragrances. It is pungent, sweet and neutral. It cleans the blood, clears the emotions and energizes the heart. It strengthens love and devotion and increases faith, forgiveness and compassion. It strengthens Ojas and helps counter such negative emotion caused diseases as cancer and aids.

SANDALWOOD: Sandalwood is the best general aroma for the mind, either as incense or as an oil applied to the head. It is sweet, pungent and cool and is diuretic, alterative, antiseptic and sedative. It nourishes the heart, cleanses the kidneys and soothes the lungs. It is good for fever, irritability or anxiety.

THYME: Thyme is pungent and warm. It is stimulant, diaphoretic and cough relieving. It is also antiseptic and insect repellant. It helps strengthen our immunity, particularly from colds, flus and lung diseases.

TURMERIC: Turmeric is primarily bitter and warm. It cleanses the blood, lymphatics and the subtle channels. It is hemostatic, analgesic and antiseptic and is good for injury to the muscles or tendons. It aids in the healing of damaged tissue. It strengthens the skin and improves complexion.

VETIVERT: Also known as khus or cous-cous grass, Vetiverian is bitter, pungent and cool (refrigerant). It calms the mind and clears heat from the head, so is very good for fevers and heatstroke. It is especially anti-Pitta and anti-infection.

WILD GINGER: Wild ginger (asarum) is spicy and warm. It is stimulating, diaphoretic and analgesic. It clears the head, opens the senses, counters headache and nerve pain.

WINTERGREEN: Wintergreen is pungent, warm and stimulating, and very good for relieving pain. It contains methyl salicylate, from which aspirin is derived and can be used much like it. It is good for muscle pain, joint pain, headache or nerve pain and can be rubbed directly on to the site. It has a clearing and harmonizing effect on the mind and emotions as well.

WORMWOOD: Wormwood is bitter, pungent and cold. It is a strong bitter aromatic and cleanses the blood, improves diges;tion and counters parasites. It detoxifies the liver, relieves fever and counters anger and irritability.

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OILS FOR THE THREE HUMORS

This is for general usage as perfumes or as fragrances for massage oils. Hence the unpleasant oils smelling are not mentioned here.

VATA: Warming and pleasant oils are best, but not too over stimulating.

Usually spicy oils like musk or cinnamon are balanced with sweet and and calming oils like sandalwood or rose. Best oils are sandalwood, aloes wood, lotus, frankincense, cinnamon, basil, camphor.

PITTA: Cool and pleasant oils are best, mainly flower essences, though some cool spices or bitter aromatics are useful.

Best are sandalwood, rose, vetiverian, lemon grass, lotus, lavender, lily, saffron, gardenia, honeysuckle, iris.

KAPHA: Hot spicy oils are best. These include essential oils and resins like camphor, cinnamon, heena, cloves, musk, sage, thyme, cedar, frankincense and myrrh.

Sweet flowers like rose or jasmine should be avoided, as well as too much sandalwood.

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FORMULAS WITH AROMATIC OILS

PERFUMES

Perfumes are usually made with flower essences, though some pleasant spices are useful also. They are aimed mainly at promoting general health, good complexion and improved perception. Many are also used to enhance attractiveness, particularly on a sexual level. For women such flower fragrances as rose, jasmine, saffron, plumeria and gardenia are good. Other pleasant fragrances include sandalwood, musk and cinnamon.

PAIN OILS

Analgesic or stopping pain oils are usually made with such herbs as wintergreen, mint, wild ginger, myrrh, cinnamon and camphor that specifically possess this property. Rubbing alcohol can be used as a base or beeswax. They can be applied to the site of pain, as in headaches, neuralgia or arthritis.

DECONGESTANT OILS

Decongestant oils are made with such individual oils as eucalyptus, camphor, sage, basil or mint that possess this property, also usually prepared in an alcohol base and rubbed in externally. Or the steam of decoctions of these herbs can be inhaled.

ANTIBIOTIC OILS

Such blood cleansing and fever reducing fragrances as sandalwood, myrrh, jasmine, gardenia, honeysuckle and iris can be made into oils to be used in acute stages of febrile diseases for countering fever and infection. They will also fortify rather than deplete the immune system and counter thirst and delirium.

ANTISEPTIC OILS

Antiseptic oils like camphor, eucalyptus, cedar, thyme and pennyroyal can be combined to treat parasites, to ward off insects or treat insect bites and to generally cleanse the skin, air and aura.

CALMING OILS

Oils can be made with sandalwood, rose, lotus, lily, nutmeg, frankincense, lavender and other calming herbs. They are very effective placed on the head before sleep. They will help prevent negative dreams and calm worry and mental agitation.

OILS FOR GYNECOLOGICAL DISORDERS

We can us oils to help ease and regulate menstruation like rose, pennyroyal or rosemary. We can also use those which are aphrodisiacs and tonics for women, like saffron, lotus or jasmine. We can combine these two groups together for balanced action. In this way aromatic oils can be used to fortify and enhance feminine energy.

DIGESTIVE STIMULANTS

Oils like cardamom, cloves, fennel, anise and ginger can be made to promote Agni and Samana vayu and stimulate digestion. They can be made into tinctures, used in teas or as flavoring agents.

OILS FOR THE IMMUNE SYSTEM

Good oils for fortifying the immune system and tonifying Ojas include myrrh, frankincense, guggul, saffron, rose, lotus. They can be taken as tonics in this regard and are good for chronic fevers and lingering infections. They are often helpful when the patient is too weak to take other therapies. They are an essential part of creating a positive psychic environment in treatment areas where people with devitalized immune systems are being cared for.

REJUVENATIVE OILS

Many oils aid in longevity and rejuvenation. Myrrh is a good rejuvenative for the blood and heart, frankincense for the blood and the brain, guggul for the brain and bones. Saffron is good for the blood, heart and uterus, rose for the heart and uterus. Lily is good for the heart and brain, sandalwood for the nerves and the brain. Lotus is useful for the heart and reproductive system. Calamus is specific to the brain and the nerves, while basil is for the nerves and the lungs. Iris can be used for the liver.

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PART III. LESSON 8

STUDY EXERCISE

Begin experimenting with the aromas around you. You may want to begin to collect some important aromatic oils or incenses. See how they affect your mind and your perception of your environment.

Go into a stagnant area like an attic and smell the air. Then see what happens when an aromatic oil is introduced.

Note the next time you have a strong emotion like anger or fear. If you are angry take a calming fragrance like rose, jasmine, lotus or sandalwood. If you are afraid take a strengthening one like cinnamon, musk or ginger. Then note your emotional change.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What is aroma therapy?
2. On what level does aroma therapy work?
3. What are some good flower fragrances for cleansing the blood?
4. Why is sandalwood such an important fragrance?
5. What are some of the properties of myrrh?
6. What are some of the properties of saffron?
7. What are some good analgesic oils?
8. What are some good calming oils?
9. What are some good oils for strengthening the female reproductive system?
10. What are some good rejuvenative oils?

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PART III. LESSON 9

SUBTLE HEALING MODALITIES OF AYURVEDA 2.

COLOR THERAPY

Color therapy is the basis of gem therapy and is an important therapy in itself. After sound therapy, it is the most important of the sensory therapies. Color is the light absorbed primarily through the eyes (alochak Pitta), though it can also be absorbed through the skin (bhrajak Pitta). It is part of the subtle nutrition of the mind and life-force, the impressions which feed them. It serves to energize the nerves and through them to stimulate the mind.

Not only do we absorb colors, our mind and body produce colors. From this we can ascertain our powers of digestion.
The wrong colors derange mental activity as the right colors help harmonize it. Color gives us emotional strength and creativity, or, wrongly applied, can disturb or depress us. Bright colors, for example, stimulate the expression of emotion and energy. Dark colors suppress emotions and can reduce energy, but can also have a calming affect. Through color most psychological diseases can be treated.

On a physical level, color also helps stimulate both digestion and circulation. It improves vitality and gives us greater power of action. Above all, it energizes the blood (ranjak Pitta). The wrong colors will either weaken circulation and depress our appetite or breed toxins in the blood and make us overactive.

Like gems, colors help strengthen the aura and astral body. The astral realm is the realm of pure form and pure color. Color therapy thereby is useful for subtle and spiritual healing.

COLOR AND TEJAS

Colors work particularly on Tejas, the mental fire. Bright colors increase Tejas; dark colors reduce it. Colors which are too bright tend to burn it out, which is another reason psychedelic drugs have this affect. Disharmonious or clashing colors derange Tejas. Hence the right use of colors can balance Tejas. Tejas can be increased by meditating upon a ghee flame or a golden light. Excess Tejas can be alleviated by the use of white or deep blue. It can be balanced by the use of green.

APPLICATION OF COLOR THERAPY

Various kinds of color lamps can be made by placing colored glass over a light bulb. A soft light is preferable, avoiding florescent bulbs or neon colors. The color shades should be mild and harmonious.

The body as a whole can be bathed in light of the particular color. We can bathe a specific part of the body in the light, like putting an infectious sore under a dark blue light. For this purpose smaller lights can be made.

We can also just expose ourselves to more of that color through the clothes we wear, the colors in our house in which we live, our car, etc.

We can expose ourselves more to the colors in nature, as by meditating upon the blue sky or blue ocean, white snow or the white light of the moon, or green trees and grass. We can also meditate upon flowers of different colors; the white lily, the red rose or hibiscus, the yellow chrysanthemum or sunflower, the blue iris.

We can also meditate upon various forms of colored glass, art works, mandalas or illuminated manuscripts.

The general rule is that impressions gained through natural sources are preferable and more nourishing and strengthening than those gained by artificial means.

Moreover we must then learn to visualize these colors in our own minds. We can then envision them in various parts of our body or mind or as surrounding us or in our subtle environment.

COLORS AND THE THREE GUNAS

It is not only the specific color relative to our constitutional humor that matters, its quality according to the three gunas must also be considered. This factor is even more important as color affects mental nature more directly than the biological humors.

All colors used should be sattvic or harmonious in nature, subtle, pleasant, harmonious, mild and natural. As color itself tends to be rajasic it must be applied with discretion and taste.

Rajasic colors are bright, loud, flashy and artificial, like neon signs. Their shades are bright, penetrating or metallic. Their contrasts are often excessive like combinations of opposite colors of red and green, blue and yellow. They overstimulate and irritate the mind and senses.

Tamasic colors are dull, dark, turbid, murky, like a stagnant green. They cause the mind and senses to become heavy, congested and inert.

Of the colors themselves white, gold, violet and blue are generally sattvic. White specifically is sattva. Yellow, orange, red and purple are rajasic, specifically bright red. Brown, grey and black are tamasic, specifically black.

However, all these colors have shades that can belong to any of the three gunas. Moreover their combinations may produce an effect that belongs to any of them.

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The following are qualities that belong to the different colors generally. They vary by shade, hue, tone and color combination. For most healing purposes primary colors are used in their most characteristic shades. White and black are not really colors but the basic polarity of light and darkness out of which color is produced.

WHITE

White is the color of purity, virtue and spirituality. It is generally cool, moist and nurturing. It is mildly cleansing to all bodily systems, counters fever and infection, and is calming to the mind, heart and emotions. It soothes the nerves, helps relieve pain and allow for the easy flow of nerve impulses and discharge of secretions. It gives vitality, substance and support.

White is a feminine color and belongs to the maternal principle. It is the color of peace and non-resistance. It gives light and increases perception. It reflects light and so can give warmth or illumination. It is the most spiritual of colors. However, in excess white can cause lack of energy or motivation, sterility, apathy and neutrality. It has a receptivity to it that can render us passive or inert. White does not reject life but it does limit it to a form of purity or limitation depending on how it is used. It increases light and consciousness but may give more inhibitions and hypersensitivity.

BLACK

Black is the color of resistance, obstruction, opposition, enmity and hatred. It is generally cold and dry. It serves to ward things away and create distance. As such, it can give some protection from negative influences, including anger, hatred, curses, negative thoughts, emotions or entities. However, it can also increase fear and suspicion of others towards us and make us more secretive or paranoid.

It also serves to remove us from the energy of life and so has been a color of monks or of widows, or in Islamic countries used to veil women and block their vitality from being perceived. It shows a negativity to life that may be evil or spiritual depending upon its nature. It gives mystery that may either deepen us or darken us. It absorbs light and so can increase heat and for this reason sometimes aggravates Pitta.

GREY

Grey is a combination of white and black. It is neutral, subdued and withdrawing. It gives objectivity and neutrality, reduces emotion and sensation but can be depressing or devitalizing.

GREEN

Green is the color of harmony and is the color of life itself. It is neutral and moist. It calms the mind and nerves and allays nerve pain. It counters the heat and acidity of the red color and helps relieve fever and headache. It balances the metabolism and helps reduce excess weight or increase that which is deficient. It tonifies the liver and spleen.

Herbs work largely through the green color and the green ray of the planet Mercury which posseses the greatest force of healing and harmonization. Placing herbs or herbal preparations under a green light will increase their basic life-force or Prana.

RED

Red is the color of stimulation, the color of energy itself, and warmth and passion. It is pungent, hot and dry. It is approaching, aggressive, attacking. As such it may provoke hostility, anger or violence against it. It is a warning color but in milder shades gives energy, vitality, passion and joy. It increases Pitta, Agni and Tejas. It decreases Kapha and Vata.

Red strengthens the heart, helps build the blood and promote circulation. It gives will, energy and authority and calls attention to us, so is the color of the warrior class or nobility.

Red is the most characteristic of all colors. Color itself is red. Hence it is the strongest of all colors and must be used in smaller amounts or with greater discretion. Red should not be used much with black, as this combines rajas and tamas.

BLUE

Blue is the color of calm and detachment, particularly dark or sky blue. It promotes solitude, meditation and independence. It is a receeding color. It is cold and dry (unless in shades of white, in which case it is moist). It helps reduce fevers and counter infections and is the natural anti-biotic color. It helps reduce tumors and relieve congestion. It helps neutralize negative and fiery emotions like anger and hatred and cools the mind. It also cools the eyes and improves the vision.

Blue promotes meditation, contemplation and retreat. For this reason the great gods of India like Vishnu and Shiva and avatars like Rama and Krishna are blue in color.

Blue and white together are very cooling and calming to the mind and give inner purity.

YELLOW

Yellow is warm and moist but not too hot. It is a lively color, the color of joy, activity, clarity, perception, communication. It increases energy and motivates us to do things and be with people but may make us superficial or hyperactive. It is often considered an earthly color and to be good for business and commerce.

GOLD

Gold serves to harmonize the mind and strengthen the heart. It is the color of the spiritual light and as such is the best color for promoting the deeper energy of Tejas. It fortifies the immune and endocrine systems and strengthens Ojas. It is the color of the sun on an inner level. It increases the consciousness of the Self.

The contrast of gold and deep blue is often the best for balancing the mind and bringing into play the deeper potentials of the soul.

ORANGE

Orange is warm, usually dry, but not attacking like red. It is energizing and increases intelligence rather than passion as with red. It can be the hottest of colors. It is like gold in that it can increase intelligence and Tejas and give illumination.

Saffron is a color of purity, intelligence and renunciation.

PURPLE/ VIOLET

Purple is a combination of blue and red, as is violet. It is cool, rich and deep. It gives authority, prestige and distance but can be overly rich or hard to take. In too strong shades it can show stagnant or suppressed emotions, particularly anger.

Violet is an ethereal color. It combines both detachment and devotion and brings out the deeper emotional potential of the soul.

BROWN

Brown is an earth color, that of rock and soil. It gives groundedness and stability and the capacity to do work. Like grey it has a neutralizing or non-emotional affect. But it may render us coarse or rough and does not bring out our astral sensitivities.

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PLANETARY COLORS

Each planet projects one of the colors of the cosmic creative ray.

Sun--------red
Moon-------white
Mars-------dark red
Mercury----green
Jupiter----yellow, gold
Venus------transparent, variagated
Saturn-----dark blue, black
Rahu-------ultraviolet
Ketu-------infrared

Colors can be used like gems for balancing the effects of the planets. This is more specifically studied in Vedic Astrology.

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COLORS AND THE HUMORS

VATA

Vata does best with colors that are warm, moist, soft and calming. This is often accomplished by combining warm colors like gold, red, orange and yellow with moist and calm colors like white or whitish shades of green or blue.

Too bright colors, like flashy reds or purples, will aggravate the nervous sensitivity of Vata types. Too strong color contrasts will also overstimulate Vata. Too many dark colors, grey, black or brown may also devitalize Vata, though under certain conditions they may ground it. Iridescent color, as long as not too bright, is very balancing for Vata generally.

Colors for Vata are best given in shapes and textures that are round, soft, square or balanced, not thin, narrow, rough or harsh.

PITTA

Pitta does best with colors that are cool, mild and calming. These are primarily white, green and blue. They should avoid those that are hot, sharp or stimulating, like red, orange and yellow.

Any colors that are too bright in color tend to derange Pitta, even green, blue or black. Pitta does best with mild shades, like pastles. Pitta types often do well by have less color around them or absence of color; for example meditating upon the dark night sky with the stars.

Pitta types should avoid colors in angular shapes or sharp and penetrating formations. They need round, soft shapes.

KAPHA

Kapha does best with colors that are warm, dry and stimulating. Kapha types can do well with bright shades and strong color contrasts. Such warm colors are red, orange, yellow and gold. They should avoid too much white or white shades of cool colors like green or blue but can use these in brighter or more lucid hues.

Too rich shades, like too rich foods, also tends to derange Kapha. Hence for Kapha types colors should be bright, light, clear and transparent. Colors which are too sweet also should be avoided, like too much pink.

Angular and pyramidal shapes are good for Kapha, which should avoid round or square forms. While color is a helpful healing substance it should not be used in excess. It can energize but easily becomes disturbing in excess.

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2. GEM THERAPY

ASTROLOGY AND GEM THERAPY

In the Vedic system of astrology used in India certain gems are correlated to the planets and used to balance out their influences. In this way gems have been used astrologically to treat physical, mental and spiritual disorders. Gem therapy was the main method of astrological treatment and was prescribed according to astrological indications.

Gems prescribed to be worn externally according to Vedic astrology can also ingested internally for similar purposes in Ayurveda. However, for internal usage they are specially treated by complex processes to render them safe and non-toxic to the physical body. These gem preparations are still used in Ayurvedic medicines today. While they are not available in the United States and may not pass through import restrictions, we can still use gems externally or use gem tinctures that do not actually involve taking the mineral itself.

Gems are worn externally as rings or as pendants hanging down to the throat or heart chakras. According to the Vedic system the fingers of the hand and the elements correspond. The little finger is earth, the ring finger is water, the middle finger is air, the index finger is ether and the thumb is fire (the being the size of the thumb in the Vedas is Agni). These correspond to the planets ruling these fingers of Mercury (earth), Sun or Moon (water), Saturn (air) and Jupiter (ether). No specific planet rules the thumb. By wearing the gems relating to these respective elements or planets on the appropriate fingers, we can strengthen their influences. It is always best if the gems are set so as to actually touch the skin.

Gem tinctures, like herb tinctures, are prepared by soaking the gem for a period of time in a 50-100% alcohol solution. Hard gems like diamond or sapphire can be soaked for one month (from full moon to full moon). Soft, usually opaque gems, like pearl and coral, are soaked for shorter periods of time or in weaker solutions.

The following are some introductory ideas. Medical astrology is a subject in itself. I have dealt with it in detail in my Vedic Astrology correspondence course and in my forthcoming book on the subject, THE ASTROLOGY OF THE SEERS.

GEMS AND THE PLANETS

The classical Vedic correspondence between the major precious gems and the planets is as follows.

The Sun------Ruby
The Moon-----Pearl
Mars---------Red Coral
Mercury------Emerald
Jupiter------Yellow Sapphire
Venus--------Diamond
Saturn-------Blue Sapphire

The Vedic system also used the lunar nodes. For the north node or dragon's head was prescribed a hessonite (golden grossularite) garnet. For the south node or dragon's tail, a cat's eye (chrysoberyl).

Uranus, Neptune and Pluto were not known to the ancients. Pluto appears to relate to dark stones like black coral or onyx. Neptune may have much in common with opals, particularly the iridescent type. Uranus has much in common with the dark blue Saturn stones like amethyst.

As most of these gem stones are very expensive the following are recommended as substitutes. As red coral is not expensive substitution for it is not necessary.

For Ruby--------------garnet or sunstone
For Pearl-------------moonstone
For emerald-----------peridot or jade
For yellow sapphire---yellow topaz or citrine
For diamond-----------clear zircon
For blue sapphire-----amethyst

TRADITIONAL USAGE OF GEMS IN ASTROLOGY AND AYURVEDA

While gems do have an action on the physical body, their main action is on the level of the life-force. Not all are strongly related to one of the biological humors. Many, as subtle or mental remedies, can help balance all three humors. We can often direct or balance their humoral action according to the metal we set them in (which serves as their vehicle).

The substitute gem stones for these primary ones usually possess the same properties to a lesser degree. The more expensive gem stones as rings should be worn in two or more carats. The less expensive or substitute are better in four or more (and larger stones yet can be used, particularly for pendants or necklaces).

RUBY

Ruby is used in astrology for strengthening the heart, improving digestion, promoting circulation, reviving fire and increasing energy. It increases Pitta and decreases Kapha and Vata. It is hot in energy and composed of the elements of fire, air and ether. It strengthens the will, promotes independence, gives insight and enhances power. It was the gem of kings. It is usually set in gold and worn on the ring finger of the right hand.

Ruby ash (Manikya bhasma) is regarded as a stimulant, nervine and heart tonic for weakness of the heart and nerves and for general debility.

PEARL

Pearl is good for promoting body fluids, nourishing the body tissues and the nerves. It increases Kapha and decreases Pitta and Vata. It is slightly cold in energy and composed of water, earth and ether. It strengthens the female reproductive system, improves fertility, and calms the emotions. It is usually set in silver and worn on the ring finger of the left hand.

Pearl ash (Moti bhasma) is said to be tonic, alterative, sedative, nervine and antacid. It is used for hyperacidity, ulcers, epistaxis, hemoptysis, liver and kidney ailments, nervous excitability, hysteria and a good general tonic for women and infants.

RED CORAL

Red coral strengthens the blood and reproductive system, improves energy and calms emotion. It harmonizes Pitta, decreases Vata but in excess can increase Kapha. It is slightly warm in energy and composed of earth, water and fire. It is an aphrodisiac, particularly for the male, builds flesh and muscle, gives courage and improves work capacity. It is usually set in silver and worn on the ring or index finger.

Red coral ash (Praval bhasma) is alterative, antacid, tonic. It is used for cough, asthma, swollen glands, hyperacidity, impotence, bleeding from the lungs, anemia, sexual debility.

EMERALD

Emerald calms mental agitation, regulates the nervous system, helps stop nerve pain and improves speech and intelligence. It harmonizes Vata, decreases Pitta but can slightly increase Kapha. It is slightly cool in energy and composed of ether, water and air. It promotes healing, energizes the breath, strengthens the lungs and increases flexibility and adaptibility of mind. It is a good harmonizing stone and good for cancer and other degenerative diseaes. For Vata and Kapha it is set in gold, for Pitta silver. It is worn on the middle or little finger.

Emerald ash (Panna bhasma) is nervine, alterative and tonic. It is used for nervous debility, neurasthenia, general debility and as a heart tonic. It is good for asthma, ulcers, skin diseases, fevers and infections and as a tonic for children.

YELLOW SAPPHIRE

Yellow sapphire gives energy and vitality and is the best general stone for promoting health. It regulates the hormonal system and increases Ojas. It is slightly warm in energy. It generally balances all the humors but is particularly good for lowering high Vata. In excess or not balanced properly it can aggravate Pitta. It is good for diabetes and all wasting diseases and for convalesence. It is composed of ether, fire and water. It is usually set in gold and worn on the index finger.

Yellow sapphire ash is tonic, alterative and nervine. It improves digestion, strengthens the heart and brings about increase of intelligence.

DIAMOND

Diamond is slightly cool in energy and composed of all five elements. It decreases Vata and Pitta but mildly increases Kapha. It strengthens the kidneys and reproductive system and enhances Ojas. It gives beauty, power and charm and enhances our creative abilities. It protects our life in extreme diseases. It is usually set in white gold and worn on the middle or little finger.

Diamond ash (Hira bhasma) is tonic, nutritive and aphrodisiac. It gives strength and firmness to the body, protects the life, increases sexual power and Ojas. It is good for chronic and wasting diseases including diabetes and tuberculosis. It also serves to help preserve the life in difficult diseases like Aids or Cancer.

Zircon ash (Vaikrant bhasma) can be used as a substitute.

BLUE SAPPHIRE

Blue sapphire is cold in energy and is composed of the elements of ether and air. It is alterative, antibiotic and antipyretic. It clears infections and wards off all negative energies. It is antitumor and antifat and good for reducing therapy. It also strengthens the bones and promotes longevity and helps calm the nerves and emotions. It promotes calm, peace and detachments. For Vata and Kapha it is set in gold, for Pitta, silver. It is worn on the middle finger.

Blue sapphire ash is uses as an alterative, nervine and antiseptic. It is good for arthritis, rheumatism, fevers, infections, nerve pain, paralysis.

HESSONITE GARNET

Hessonite garnet is neutral in energy and composed of the elements of fire, water and ether. Like the yellow sapphire, golden hessonite is a good balancing stone. It calms the nerves, quiets the mind, relieves depression. As the north lunar node is thought to indicate the influence of illusion, Maya, which is predominant in the dark age in which we live, this stone is recommended for almost everyone as it counters the negative influence of this astral force. It is usually set in gold and worn on the middle finger. No ash of it is commonly made.

Only the golden type has this property. The red is also useful but the dark red will only strengthen our emotional nature and may increase negative emotions.

CAT'S EYE

Cat's eye is hot in energy and composed of the elements of fire, air and ether. It increases Pitta and decreases Kapha and Vata. It stimulates tejas, mental fire, and is good for promoting psychic and spiritual perception. It is a good nervine stimulant and is helpful for mental disorders. It is the gem stone of seers and astrologers. It also is not usually found as an ash.

QUARTZ CRYSTAL

The commonly used quartz crystal is also used in the Vedic system. Clear quartz is considered a Venus stone, cloudy or milky a stone for the Moon. Clear quartz has an action similar to diamond but much weaker. It is regarded as a very impressionable stone that often just serves to magnify whatever influence, good or bad, is around it. Hence it should be purified and energized properly through mantra and meditation.

Rock crystal ash (Sphatika bhasma) is regarded as alterative, hemostatic and tonic and used to treat bleeding disorders, anemia, chronic fever, jaundice, asthma, constipation and general debility.

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GEMS AND HERBS

The properties of hot, spicy herbs can be increased by taking them with a ruby tincture or along with the wearing of a ruby or its substitutes.

The properties of tonic and rejuvenative herbs can be increased by taking them with a tincture of yellow sapphire or yellow topaz or wearing these stones or their substitutes.

The properties of herbs to clear heat, cleanse the blood, detoxify the liver and reduce tumors can be increased by taking them with a blue sapphire tincture or along with wearing of the stone or its substitutes, like amethyst.

The properties of nervine and harmonizing herbs can be increased by taking with an emerald tincture or along with the wearing of an emerald or its substitutes.

The properties of stimulant and aphrodisiac herbs can be increased by taking along with a red coral tincture or with the wearing of red coral.

The properties of emmenagogue herbs or tonics to the reproductive system can be increased by taking with a diamond tincture or by wearing of diamond or its substitutes.

The properties of demulcent and nutritive tonic herbs can be increased by taking with pearl tincture or by wearing of pearl and its substitutes.

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4. MANTRA AND SOUND THERAPY

Mantras are special powerful sounds, usually root sounds of the Sanskrit language, the legendary language of the gods. Such primal sounds are called sacred seed syllables, seed or 'bija' mantras.

According to the Vedic system all creation proceeds through sound, as sound is the sense quality belonging to ether, the origin of all the other elements. Hence through sound all creation, all the elements can be controlled. As all disharmonies arise in body or mind arise from an imbalance of the five elements the right sounds can be used to adjust them all. All workings of the universe are various harmonic vibrations based on sound; the universe itself is music. Hence sound is the original and most primal of all creative and healing energies.

The mind is like a sixth sense organ or sixth element (the mind-space or mind-ether). Its sensory quality is the mental aspect of sound, which is the word; the sound which has meaning and is a means of communication. Hence healing sounds can also balance the mind. They can help change the structure of the mind and recreate

it on a more harmonious level. The term mantra itself literally means 'the instrument of the mind' or 'what protects the mind.' Power over the mind, and also the psychic powers of the mind (siddhis) arise through the power of the mantra.

In Yoga psychology mantras are used to correct psychological and psychic disorders. Such disorders are seen as an imbalance of energy in the mind. A mantra of opposite energy is employed to neutralize it. While psychological analysis often remains superficial and only serves to get the patient caught in their own self-centered emotional reactions, mantras are effective tools for correcting the underlying imbalance that do not require any painful or tedious deliberation.

Mantra also help balance Prana, Tejas and Ojas and the subtle forms of Vata, Pitta and Kapha as Prana, Sadhak and Tarpak. Mantras serve to help harmonize the nerve tissue (majja dhatu) and can help clear subtle impurities from the nerves and subtle channels (nadis). They aid in concentration and creative thinking. They also serve as asanas or yogic postures for the mind and are effective tools of mental exercise and creative energization. Mantras are the most important part of the spiritual and mental therapy of Ayurveda.

Mantras can also be can be used to energize the healing process, either by the healer or the client. They serve to empower all our actions on a subtle level. Through them the cosmic life force can be infused into our healing methods. They serve to give a soul or spirit to the forms that we provide, thus allowing for a truly integral healing process.

PRIME MANTRAS

OM: Om is the most important mantra. It represents the Divine Word itself. It serves to energize or empower all things and all processes. Therefore all mantras begin and end with Om. It clears the mind, opens the channels and increases Ojas.

Om is an important healing sound. It is the sound of affirmation and serves to awaken the positive life-force necessary (Prana) for healing to occur.

RAM: (with an a-sound as in 'father'). This is the best mantra for drawing down the protective light and grace of the Divine. It gives strength, calm, rest, peace and is particularly good for high Vata conditions and mental disorders. These include insomnia, bad dreams, nervousness, anxiety, excessive fear and fright.

It also strengthens and fortifies Ojas and strengthens the immune system.

HUM: (pronounced with the 'u' sound as in our word 'put'). This is the best mantra for warding off negative influences attacking us, whether disease causing pathogens, negative emotions or even black magic. It is also the best mantra for awakening Agni, for promoting the digestive fire. It is good for burning up Ama and for cleansing the channels. It increases Tejas and the perceptive powers of the mind. It is sacred to Shiva and is the sound of Divine wrath.

AIM: (pronounced like aym) This is the best mantra for the mind, for improving concentration, thinking, for rational powers and for improving speech. It awakens and increases intelligence (buddhi). It is helpful in mental and nervous disorders for restoring powers of speech, communication, control of the senses and mind, etc. It is the sacred sound of the Goddess of Wisdom, Saraswati.

SHRIM (pronounced 'Shreem'): This is the best mantra for promoting general health, beauty, creativity and prosperity. Shrim strengthens the plasma (rasa) and reproductive fluids (shukra) and increases overall health and harmony.

HRIM: (pronounced 'hreem') is a mantra of cleansing and purification. It gives energy, joy and ecstasy but intially causes atonment. It aids any detoxification process.

KRIM: (pronounced as in our word 'cream'). This mantra gives the capacity for work and action and adds power and efficasy to what we do. It is good for chanting while making preparations as it allows them to work better.

KLIM: (pronounced 'kleem') gives strength, sexual vitality and control of the emotional nature. It increases Kapha, shukra and Ojas. It grounds us and gives us balance.

SHAM: this is the mantra of peace and can be used generally for promoting calm, detachment and contentment. It is good for mental and nervous disorders, for stress, anxiety, disturbed emotions, tremors, shaking or palpitations. It is particularly useful in chronic degenerative nervous system disorders.

SHUM: (pronounced as in shoe but with the vowel not drawn out very long). This mantra increases vitality, energy, fertility and sexual vigor. It is the mantra for shukra.

SOM: (prounced like home). This mantra increases energy, vitality, joy, delight and creativity. It increases Ojas and strengthens the mind, heart and nerves. It is good for rejuvenation and tonification therapies.

MANTRAS AND THE ELEMENTS

The five elements can be strengthened by their respective mantras. These are Lam for Earth, Vam for Water, Ram for Fire, Yam for Air and Ham for Ether. In each case the 'a' sound is short, just like the vowel sound in our word 'the'.

These mantras will also strengthen the systems they govern.

LAM is good for the root chakra and excretory system and stabilizes Apana Vayu. It gives groundedness, stability, calm, content, joy and happiness.

VAM is good for the sex center and the urino-genital system and helps balance the water metabolism. It gives creativity, fertility, power of imagination.

RAM (with the vowel as in 'but') relates to the navel center and solar plexus and helps increase Agni and improve the power of digestion. It increases will, perception, energy and motivation.

YAM works on the heart and circulatory system and helps improve circulation. It increases energy, enthusiasm.

HAM works on the throat and the respiratory system and increases the power of breath and Prana, the primary life-force.

For the third eye and the mind, the mantra KSHAM is used. It gives concentration, peace and stability of mind and gives calm and breadth to the mind-space.

OM relates to the head center and awakens our deeper consciousness. It gives the full expansion of consciousness-space.

MANTRAS AND THE HUMORS

Mantras are helpful for balancing all three humors. They are particularly good for Vata, as they relate more specifically to the sound quality that it rules.

Mantras for Vata should be warm, soft, soothing and calming. Vata types should not chant out loud too long as this may have a depleting affect upon their energy. After a few minutes of vocal chanting, they should chant silently.

Too much of OM is not always good for Vata as it tends to increase the space or ether in the mind, which in their case is already too high. RAM is the best mantra for them generally, as it is warming, calming and protecting. HUM is good for dispell;ing the fear and anxiety they are prone to.

Mantras for Pitta should be cool, soothing and calming. OM is excellent in this regard, also AIM, SHRIM and SHAM.

Kapha types do well with much vocal chanting or singing. Mantras for them should be warm, stimulating and activating. HUM is excellent, also OM and AIM.

APPLICATION OF MANTRA

Mantras can be used by the healer to energize the healing process or by the patient to increase their own healing.

They can be used to purify the treatment room. OM is effective for this, as is HUM. They can be used to bring the Divine light and cosmic life force into the healing room. OM or RAM are effective for this. They can be chanted mentally by the healer over the client to help clear them on a psychic level. OM is good for this. They can be used to energize the healing power of herbs or medicines. KRIM or SHRIM are good for this.

For mental or nervous disorders, it is important that the patient or client chant the appropriate mantra. Sham relieves pain and fever. Hum restores nerve function and counters paralysis. Som helps rebuild the cerebro-spinal fluid.

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PART III. LESSON 9

STUDY EXCERCISES

Meditate upon the primary colors, blue, green, red, yellow, white and black and see how they effect your mind. Try to visualize each color and hold it for a period of three minutes.

Go outdoors and focus on the blue sky for a period of fifteen minutes and see how it cleanses your perception. Try to devise other such sensory exercises.

The next time your mind is agitated chant Om aloud for ten minutes and see how you feel. The next time you feel afraid chant Ram and see what it does. The next time you are agitated chant Sham. Try to verify the qualities of these things according to your own experience.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What are good colors for Vata
2. What are good colors for Pitta
3. What are good colors for Kapha
4. Why is white a good color to wear
5. Why is green good for healing?

6. Why is gem therapy important?
7. How is diamond used?
8. How is emerald used?
9. What are good gems for Vata?

10. How is mantra therapy used?
11. What are the properties of Om?
12. What are some good mantras for calming the mind?
13. What are some good mantras for stimulating the mind?
14. How can mantra be used to enhance the healing process?

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PART III. LESSON 10

YOGA AND AYURVEDIC PSYCHOLOGY, PRACTICAL APPLICATION

In this last section there will be a summary of the spiritual points of Ayurveda and the outlining of life-style and counseling methods for the three humors.

ORIGIN OF THE THREE HUMORS FROM SACCHIDANANDA (BEING-CONSCIOUSNESS-BLISS)

There are a number of ideas as to the origin of the humors. The following are those which are most ultimate, which go most deeply into cosmic reality. This is a more esoteric part of Ayurveda and Yoga but helps us to understand the overall continuity of reality, manifest and unmanifest.

According to the older Vedantic teachings, Prana, the life-force, arises directly from the Purusha, the spirit or being of pure awareness. The spirit is the force that animates and directs all things. That original force reflected from pure consciousness is Prana. It precedes even the mind in manifestation and is the basis for the intelligence or Buddhi. That is why in deep sleep, when the mind is in abeyance, the life-force still functions and maintains the continuity of both body and mind.

Hence in the ancient texts, like the Upanishads, the Prana-Purusha is the main teaching, the Self of Life (called also Indra). It is the connection of the life and consciousness principles.

Life, therefore, comes from the transcendent, the absolute and is in essence Divine and eternal. Material or observable phenomena, the whole realm of nature or Prakriti, is not only insentient (not conscious in itself), it is also inanimate (not animate in itself), being inert (jada) in nature. Incarnate life is transient or limited, all creatures must eventually die, because the connection between being and form, through which life appears, is temporary and artificial. Form can only reflect life for a time because life really belongs to being itself.

It is the reflection of pure consciousness, the sentient principle, that allows for the appearance and action of intelligence. So too, pure consciousness is the animating principle, whose reflection allows for the appearance of life and motion.

Another name for the transcendent is Brahma or creative reality. From it Prana or the life-force arises as an effusion. This was metaphored as the ocean overflowing itself as waves.

VATA

Prana, or Vata, the biological air-humor, of which it is the essence, arises from the nature of reality as pure being or eternal existence (sat). Being reflected into manifestation is life.

Our basic desire in living is 'may I live forever, may I always be and never cease to be.' That idea arises from our eternal connection with being itself. For this reason Vata types are most afflicted by the fear of death.

PITTA

Agni, or Pitta, the biological fire-humor, of which it is the essence, arises from the nature of reality as pure consciousness (chit). Pure consciousness reflects itself in manifestation as the power of perception and discrimination, which on a physical level becomes digestion. This becomes our seeking of light and wanting to be always in the light. 'May I always see, may my light not cease.' This causes Pitta people to want to shine and not to be obstructed.

KAPHA

Soma, or Kapha, of which it is the essence, arises from the nature of reality as bliss (ananda). Bliss reflects itself in manifestation as the power of love, caring and nurturance in life, which manifests through Kapha and its supportive role in organic processes. This becomes our desire for happiness. 'May I not suffer, may I not cease to be happy.' Hence Kapha types want to be loved.

LIFE, LIGHT AND LOVE

Sacchidananda, Being-Consciousness-Bliss, reflects itself in creation as Life-Light-Love. These are inherent in all life and it is the natural right of all beings to be able to enjoy these. They manifest as biological principles of Vata, Pitta and Kapha.

Hence if we follow any of the humors back through their mental and spiritual forms, we arrive at this threefold Absolute. The three humors reflect the threefold Absolute or the threefold nature of the Purusha. They show how it reflects itself on the forms of creation and animates them to experience this basic nature of reality.

For this reason, all the humors have sattvic, rajasic and tamasic forms. Each of them can be used as a particular path of inner growth. All have their origin in the Divine and serve to take us back to it. They are another manifestation of the threefold nature of Reality itself.

The three humors thus reflect the three basic statuses of the Divine being itself. Each is not only integral to creation but also to the transcendent.

THE PROCESS OF INCARNATION

The body, both gross and subtle, is formed of the five elements and modified into the five sense organs and five organs of action to serve as a vehicle for the experience of consciousness. The soul enters it and animates it through Prana, the life-force, which is the reflection of the eternal being of the soul.

The life-force in turn enters into the five sense organs as the five powers of light or perception, which becomes the basis for the five forms of Pitta. This is through the consciousness that is inherent in being that is reflected with the life-force.

The life-force moreover enters into the five organs of action as the five powers of delight or enjoyment, which becomes the basis for the five forms of Kapha. This is through the bliss or love that is inherent in being and is reflected also with the life-force.

Prana arises from the principle of sat or existence. Hence it relates on the deeper level to sattva. As being reflected into form it creates energy and life. As such it becomes the basis for rajas or energy in action.

Agni or the essence of Pitta arises from the principle of chit or consciousness. It is also sattvic on its deeper level. As the power of perception it is also a sattvic modification of Prana, which in itself becomes rajasic in creation.

Soma or the essence of Kapha arises from the principle of ananda or bliss. It is also sattvic on its deeper level. As the power of enjoyment that works through the organs of action it is also a tamasic modification of Prana.

Hence Prana becomes the general principle of life or energy, that subjectifies itself through the senses as Pitta and objectifies itself through the organs of action as Kapha. The three biological humors are just the three basic different statuses of the life-force. They are not the elements but the life-force working through them.

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THE PROCESS OF KNOWLEDGE

Before treating the mind we must first understand the process of knowledge.

THE THREE MEANS OF KNOWLEDGE

Three means of knowledge are recognized in Sankhya and Ayurveda. These are:

1. Direct perception (pratyaksha)
2. Inference (anumana)
3. Revelation (aptopadesha)

DIRECT PERCEPTION

Direct perception, literally 'what is before our eyes', on a lower level, is what we actually see with our senses; for example, that fire burns or water is wet. On a higher level, it is the principles that we have perceived to be true; for example, that selfishness leads to sorrow.

On the level of health and the physical body, it is only when we have really perceived the effects of the three biological humors in our own body and those of others, that we have direct knowledge of them, not when we have merely read about them. This is like when we see the red face of a high Pitta person or the dry and cracked skin of a Vata type.

INFERENCE

Inference is what we can deduce based upon direct perception, like 'where there is smoke, there is fire.' It is based upon a constant connection of cause and effect between phenomenon. Inference is the power of reason. Ayurveda recognizes the validity of reason based upon direct perception to ascertain truth and encourages the development of logic and reason in our minds.

REVELATION

Revelation is the instruction to us from those who know or who possess direct perception. On a lower level, this is no more than asking a friend who has better sight of a situation what they see. On a higher level, this is the instruction of those who have arrived at a more direct perception of truth than we have. In this regard, the classical Ayurvedic texts were regarded as a kind of revealed knowledge on a medical level, just as scriptures are regarded as such on a spiritual level.

PRIMACY OF DIRECT PERCEPTION

In reality, however, the only real form of knowledge is direct perception. Reason and revelation are always limited or capable of misinterpretation. They are to supplement direct perception and cannot be regarded as sufficient in themselves.

Hence though we rely on books and the development of reason in Ayurveda it is direct perception that we must emphasize. This is not to limit ourselves to sensory knowledge. Ayurveda also teaches us to observe our emotions, thoughts and the ego itself. It is only when we dispassionately observe all aspects of our nature that we can be said to really have direct perception.

To help our patients or clients we must also awaken their own direct perception, their own individual understanding of what their condition is and why it has come into being.

Direct perception alone gives clarity, certainty and freedom. If we do not ourselves perceive the disharmony of our ways, we will not have the power to change them.

REASON ACCORDING TO DIRECT PERCEPTION

Based upon this direct perception we must also help teach our clients how to reason and how to ascertain the consequences of their actions. True reason always follows from direct perception and does not try to construct reality for itself (as when we rationalize things). Ayurveda stresses the highest form of reason and is not a science of imagination or wishful thinking.

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THE FIVE TYPES OF MENTAL ACTIVITY

The mind has five different characteristic types of activity in the Yoga and Ayurveda system. These are:

1. Right knowledge
2. False knowledge
3. Imagination
4. Sleep
5. Memory

Right knowledge (pramana) consists of the three means of knowledge mentioned above, mainly direct perception. False knowledge is what is opposite this. It is not true to the nature of the object perceived. This is delusion, illusion or hallucination.

Imagination (vikalpa) is wishful thinking, something that has no fact behind it but comes from our own preconceptions and need to rationalize the ego.

Sleep (nidra) is the basic state of the mind without any object of perception. It is a kind of ignorance, the basic self-involved or Tamasic state of the mind.

Memory (smriti) is a state of mind that reflects previous right knowledge. But false memory can exist as well.

THE PROCESS OF LEARNING

Ayurveda exists as part of a science of right knowledge. Its goal is to develop right knowledge about health as part of developing right knowledge of the world. Right knowledge brings peace and happiness (sattva) to the mind. Wrong knowledge leads to disturbance and eventual unhappiness, when we discover that things are not as we have thought them to be.

It is important therefore that we learn to discern which form of mental activity is going on in our minds and which level of the mind is active. The Vedic system and Ayurveda with it, not only

teach us things, they first teach us how to learn. For us to discover this we must first know how our minds work. The Buddhi or intelligence is the level of the mind involved in the process of true learning. When it is not influenced by ego and desire it allows for true knowledge to be ascertained.

Hence we also need to teach our patients how to learn. This is the basis for the real cure of all physical and psychological disorders. This failure of wisdom Ayurveda sees as the root of disease, is nothing but a failure in learning, a failure to learn from life and its inherent wisdom as expressed through its energies and elements. To know how to learn we must first understand how our minds work and what learning is. Otherwise we may confuse the action of ego, desire or fear with learning. The method of thinking taught in Ayurveda is to teach us to learn, not to leave us with some final idea as truth but to give us the basis for arriving at truth ourselves.

DEVELOPING THE MIND

The key for developing the mind, whether for improving mental health or aiding in spiritual growth, is in establishing the right functioning of the intelligence or Buddhi. It is the basis of both direct perception and true reason in the mind. The awakening of this intelligence is the key to the unfoldment of true awareness.

For the awakening of the intelligence there must first be a revulsion or turning away from the realm of the ego. There must be a revolution in awareness itself wherein we move from preoccupation with the me and the mine to a process of self-examination and objective inquiry into the nature of truth. Disease, pain or suffering are often meant to trigger this inner change. Disease is a symptom that our view of the world and way of living has been limited, self-centered or out of harmony. Hence even when dealing with severe physical ailments we must aim at developing the intelligence of the patient as an integral part of the cure.

For psychological disorders, this learning of the ways and functions of the mind and its right usage is as important as teaching right diet for the treatment of disease. All psychological disorders rest upon a wrong functioning of the intelligence, which is an inability to perceive reality. To treat them Ayurveda offers various methods to teach us how to perceive. These involve self-observation, yoga and meditation. In more severe psychological disorders rituals and psychic cleansings are used to establish a foundation for this.

In such practises we must provide for the patient a new way to perceive and experience the world and themselves. It is not enough just to tell them how things are. We must give them tools for developing their own direct awareness. The mind cannot be programmed to get well. What is necessary is for it to experience how it is making itself sick and why.

HEALING THE MIND

The Vedic concept of matter includes all that is observable as an object. It is a far more subtle concept than our idea of gross matter as something solid. In its view energy, emotions, ideas, even the ego itself is material; that is observable and external to consciousness. Anything that has name, form or action is thus material, insentient, inanimate, part of primal Matter or Prakriti.

RETURNING TO THE STATE OF THE SEER

In this regard we can try a simple meditative experiment. First observe an object, anything around you, a tree outside the window or a cup on the table. It is apart from your eye and your eye is not damaged by any changes in the object, as, for example, if the cup falls and breaks.

Next you can observe your eye with your mind. The mind can note changes in the eye like greater or lesser acuity, sensitivity to light or just its opening and closing. These do not affect the mind which continues to function even when we are blind. Hence the sense organs are objects for the mind, as the sense objects are objects for the sense organs.

As a third step we can observe the mind and the various thoughts and emotions that compose it, including the 'I' thought. We can observe our fear or anger, our opinions and beliefs, even our self-image, which we will find is the core of the mind.

To truly and completely do this, to observe our ego reactions with the same dispassion we may view a cup is to enter into the state of the seer or Purusha. Though our thoughts are internal to our body, they are still external to our consciousness, as otherwise we could not see them. For the real seer, which is pure awareness, all the movements of thought are objects. Apart from thought which is its activity, there is no entity called the mind, as all things in nature are nothing but the attributes and actions which compose them.

The mind as an organic entity is something produced. It has its own characteristic stages of growth, decay and death. It has a process of metabolism involving both taking in of substances that serve to build it up and releasing waste materials, which can poison it. Like the body it requires proper nutrition. Like the body it requires proper exercise.

Though most of us consider at least somewhat how we feed and exercise our body, we are usually not aware of how we care for our minds. We are often so caught up in our emotions, we are not able to consciously care for our minds, but are driven by its impulses. As a result our minds become distorted and their natural urge towards light and knowledge becomes warped into a seeking of pleasure and self-aggrandizement.

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METABOLISM ON THE VARIOUS LEVELS OF THE MIND

The most basic level of nourishment for the mind comes through the food we eat, as the subtle essence of food. That we have dealt with under sections on diet.

Through the senses we take in various impressions from the external world; the colors, shapes, sounds and so on around us.

Through the emotions (manas) we absorb various feelings; the love and hate, attraction and repulsion from other people.

Through the ego (ahankara) we take in various ideas about ourselves; who we are and what we can do.

Through the intelligence (buddhi) we receive various ideas or beliefs about the nature of reality; that the world or society is good or bad, real or unreal.

Each level of the mind, therefore, has its characteristic form of nutrition.

The outer levels of the mind take on nourishment from the outer world; the inner levels are fed more by our interchanges with people. Our emotional body is a socially produced and sustained entity, as our physical body depends upon the physical environment.

METABOLISM OF IMPRESSIONS

Through the senses we take in the Tanmatras or subtle energies of the objects we perceive. These Tanmatras tend to modify our minds according to their nature.

If the impressions we take in are unwholesome; ie. if we live in a noisy and polluted part of a large city like New York, it will tend to derange the mind. Hence positive impressions, like those gathered during a hike or walk in the woods, or harmonious forms, colors and music, will help balance the mind through the senses.

The mind is very sensitive to impressions. Only if we have a great deal of mental control and inner awareness can we effectively ward off all negative impressions. Our impressions help feed our life force and vitalize the mind.

METABOLISM OF EMOTIONS

If the feelings we take in are unwholesome, like fear, anger and hatred, this will disturb our emotional nature. It will derange the mind through the emotions. If, however, we are receptive only to love, friendship and happiness, this will promote emotional calm and contentment.

Thus it is very important that we do not react to the negative emotions of others, that we do not get mad at them when they get mad at us, or feel afraid either. Emotional reactions allow negative emotions from the environment to enter our minds, wherein they can only promote disturbance and unhappiness.

Love is the only emotion that can be really digested. The others we must learn to deflect with the detachment of our awareness. Love, it should be noted, has many forms as compassion, devotion, joy etc. It is our failure to love, to be loving, that is the source of all emotional disturbances. The desire to be loved, on the other hand, is a failure to give love. Our real emotional nourishment comes from within as the power of love. We cannot simply pick it up from the outside like we can good food, though as children, when our inner connections are not entirely formed, we require love from the outside to sustain us.

This lack of love during childhood is the basis of emotion;al disturbances later on in life as it creates an improperly formed emotional body, just as malnutrition in childhood can cripple the physical body.

METABOLISM OF THE SELF

If the ideas we take in about ourselves are negative; that we are ugly, stupid, sick, inept, failures etc. we will develop a poor self-image, lack of confidence and a generally servile or self-degrading attitude in life.

If the ideas we take in about ourselves are positive; that we are happy, intelligent, attractive, capable, etc. then we will be able to function with confidence, enthusiasm and independence in the world.

We are in life who we think we are and what we think we can do, we can accomplish. Our talents and capacities in life are nothing but a reflection of our ideas about ourselves. If we think we can do something then we will be able to do it. But a consistent committed belief that is willing to manifest itself in action is required, not just a temporary thought. If we really belief in something we will manifest it as a condition of who we are. Hence we are who we think we are in our hearts, not just in the passing thoughts of our surface mind.

Most diseases arise from a negative attitude about ourselves and a basic self-destructiveness. Hence to get well we must first of all have faith in ourselves and in the meaning and purpose of our own lives. We must respect the soul and the Divine being within us.

The essential idea about ourselves that promotes health and happiness is that we are here for spiritual growth and capable of bringing an energy of truth and love into the world. As with the emotions, the true nourishment for the self must ultimately come from within, through the soul. Usually it is the place of religion to provide this, hence various sacraments in the growth of a person. But as these religious structures have broken down for many of us we must seek a more direct and personal route or connect up with various spiritual teachings.

The idea of ourselves that comes purely from the external world is ultimately negative, because it is an idea of mortality and limitation to name and form. Even the idea that we are a great person can cause disease, as can any definition of ourselves not as an eternal being but a transient becoming. Whatever limited identity we accept as who we are must cause eventual disease or sorrow.

METABOLISM OF BELIEFS

If the beliefs we take in are negative, if our judgements about reality are negative; that life is miserable, pointless, that there is no truth, no God, no lasting happiness, then our intelligence will not flower.

If the beliefs we take in are positive; that there is truth, bliss, the eternal, liberation, then our intelligence can develop properly.

So too, disease is usually based upon a lack of purpose or value in life, which follows from wrong belief. We get caught in a limited idea of what the world is and that cuts us off from the greater healing forces of the infinite life.

Intelligence is a two-edged sword. It can discern the true from the false and thereby deliver us from dependency on the external world. It can also cause excessive doubt and leave us in a state wherein nothing is true or real. This is like the malaise of the western intellectual as in Dostoevsky or existential philosophy. The intellect is very sharp but only turned outwardly. It can discern the falseness of things but does not have the peace to reflect the truth. Thereby it becomes cynical or suicidal.

Hence our beliefs to be really nourishing must come from within, must reflect a faith in the spiritual purpose and meaning of life.

METABOLISM OF THE MIND SUMMARIZED

Outer factors that nourish the mind include food and impressions. The breath also serves to nourish the mind and our intake of impressions is through the breath, which energizes the senses.

Inner factors that nourish the mind include love, self-dignity and eternal values. Negative emotions, negative self-image and negative ideas about the world or reality are factors of decay in the mind, though they may promote some of the lesser goals of life.

Hence it is important we realize that in our communications with others we are feeding their minds, positively or negatively. We should, therefore, give off only communications that nurture the soul and promote wholeness, not those that have an energy of decay or disintegration.

There are sources of inner nourishment in the outer world, like spiritual teachers and teachings, or just loving and helpful friends. We must learn to access these as a means of developing our own more direct inner resources. We should also take such roles in the world, particularly as a healer, to allow others to establish their own inner sustenance.

WAYS OF BALANCING THE MIND

Hence for balancing the mind certain techniques can be used involving positive ´impressions, positive emotions, ideas and attitudes.

Even negative emotions like anger can be used in a positive way to arouse a lethargic person to face themselves or take better care of their health. This is particularly useful for Kapha types who often have much inertia and need to be strongly motivated. We may have to threaten or scare them into following out a treatment, vividly portraying the consequences of their wrong or disharmonious actions.

But it is a very preliminary method, mainly for children and even then not always good. It should not be applied in Vata or Pitta types as it would tend to derange them on an emotional level.

Other methods include mental and social exercises wherein patients must act in a way that challenges their preconceptions. They may be put in a situation wherein they have to find a different idea about themselves or the nature of the world. A person who is afraid of crowds may have to be put in a crowd under certain guided circumstances in order to be able to perceive the unreality or that fear.

In this regard it is not enough to merely think good thoughts about ourselves; that we are happy and wise and will receive prosperity and abundance on all levels. This can be an ego preoccupation and can give more power to the ego. It is not helpful to pretend we are happy when we are not, that we are wise when we are foolish, or that we are healthy when we are sick.

What we need to do is have a willingness to learn, a willingness to change our life to allow for health to occur. In this it is helpful to have a sense of the perfection of all life, in which we also are whole, and to attune ourselves to that rather than an assertion of our separate well being which must lead to decay. From this comes a new form of action that challenges our fears and limitations.

As thought is dualistic, one thought tends to evoke its opposite. If we try to hard to become happy we will just make ourselves sad. The pursuit of happiness is sorrow because it is a seeking of happiness externally where it cannot be found. We must create the life-style that allows change and not just indulge in wishful thinking.

Along with positive attitudes we must develop detachment. Our positive wishes should not be self-centered but should be for the good of all. We should wish and pray for happiness for all beings, including ourselves, for all life, but if we focus too much on our own well being we will only increase the separative nature of the ego that brings sorrow.

TRANSCENDENCE OF THOUGHT AND EMOTION

On the highest level, we do not take into ourselves emotions or thoughts from the external world. We observe them but do not identify with them (ingest them). The mind receives its nourishment directly from within or through a direct communion with reality on an inner level. This is also the internalization of the world, the seeing the world in ourselves and our self in the world.

In that we see our Self in all beings and all beings in ourselves. This is the highest form of nutrition wherein we absorb our inner Self in all things. It brings about the full development of life and intelligence.

When the mind is calm and at peace it is like the ocean. The rivers of the senses cannot affect it. It is free from influence from the external world. It can enjoy impressions, delight in the beauty of nature, but is not dependent upon that energy. Hence from negative impressions, we move to positive impressions in order to go beyond impressions altogether into direct communion with all. Where there is direct perception we receive no impression other than bliss (ananda or soma).

MENTAL DIGESTION

The mind or inner organ exists to provide experience and liberation for the soul, as we have explained in the background of Ayurvedic (Sankhya) philosophy.

Experience that we have digested, that is have understood, brings freedom and allows for the expansion of energy and awareness. This is just as food we have digested releases energy that allows us to function. Experience that we have not digested, that is not understood, brings disturbance and dullness to the mind and becomes a weight that drags us down.

Manas, the sensate mind, exists to bring in experiences from the outer world. It does not have the power to digest them. It has an outgoing nature, whereas digestion depends upon a capacity to internalize our experience, to break it down and render it part of our consciousness, just as food has to be broken down to be able to become part of our body and serve to build it up.

It is only the intelligence, Buddhi, that possesses the power

to digest experiences. Manas is like the mouth that takes food in but it cannot digest it. Dominated by it we are like a person who only knows what tastes good but not what is nourishing.

As long as we are ruled by Manas, by the desire mind, we can only take in impressions from the external world. We cannot adequately assimilate them. Most of us live on this level, ever seeking more positive or pleasurable sensations and responses. Hence we continually feed the mind with sensations but do not consider how we might digest them or what form of nutrition they might provide.

Hence the sensate mind creates karma, which is nothing but the inertia of undigested experience. Buddhi, intelligence, alone has the power to neutralize it.

MENTAL EXERCISE AND EXPRESSION

The mind exists not only to receive but also to express. It takes in impressions and ideas but also must express them. Not expressing the mind causes it to atrophy, just as not exercising the body. This does not mean we have to talk loudly or write books. But the mind must also be used as an organ of action.

Just as there are asanas, yoga postures for balancing the body and harmonizing its activity, so there are postures for the mind. These are various mantras, visualizations or self-studies, or simply just mental exercises, like logic or a game of chess. Lack of mental activity or wrong mental activity can also derange mind and through it the body, just as lack of physical exercise or wrong physical exercise can damage the body.

BALANCING THE MIND IN THE TREATMENT OF DISEASE

This understanding of the mind gives us important tools for treating disease, physical or mental.

1. We must make sure that the patient has an adequate intake of positive impressions.
2. The patient must have adequate release of negative emotions.
3. The patient must have an idea about themselves that allows for health or harmony to be restored.
4. The patient must have an idea about the nature of life that makes life worth living.

INTAKE OF POSITIVE IMPRESSIONS

This has to be done in two ways; first in terms of the immediate environment or home, second in terms of the general environment.

The patient must have beauty and harmony in their home environment. They must have a place of rest and happiness to resort to. To bring this about it is often necessary to create a sacred or healing space in the house.

An altar can be established with pictures of saints, sages or deities, sacred objects like statues, gems or crystals, harmonious shapes, colors or geometrical designs, etc. Incense, flowers, fragrances, bells or music can be used. Some prayer, meditation or relaxation should be done daily at this place.

Ideally the house should be a temple but at least one portion of it should be kept as a place of healing and meditation wherein the individual can go to be renewed. We should resort to such a healing room whenever our physical or mental energy is drained. In severe cases a patient may have to stay in such a healing room for extended periods.

In terms of the general environment, we must reestablish our communion with nature. A certain amount of time must be spent daily, weekly or monthly in direct connection with nature. Hiking, camping or a mere work in the garden can be done. We must draw into our lives the energy of the sun, the stars, the sky, the clouds, the mountains, valleys, rivers, ocean, rain, wind and so on. This links us up to the cosmic life force which alone has the power to heal our individual life force. Our individual and social life force cannot heal itself if it becomes a closed system, apart from nature, and suffers from entropy when we try to act upon ourselves.

Vata people particularly benefit from an environment of rest, relaxation, stability, peace, security and contentment. Pitta people need a place of relaxation, recreation, amusement, beauty, affection and delight. Kapha people need a place of exercise, work, stimulation, motivation and exertion.

Here we can use the information on color, gem, aroma and such subtle healing methods along with general life-style for the humors.

EMOTIONS

We must release our negative emotions as they arise. This means that we must first take responsibility for them. To do that we must take responsibility for our lives and cease to blame others. We must also cease to delight in negative emotions and their drama, cease to use them to make ourselves important.

We must open up to the energy of love and be willing to give love even if it is not returned, having faith in the power of love. In the Vedic religion we have only one duty and that is to give. This should be our attitude. All the universe is an offering, which is in itself the energy of healing (reintegration). If we are all giving then no one will suffer want. If we are all taking then no one will ever have enough.

Vata people must learn to surrender fear and anxiety, for this they need peace, faith and courage. Pitta people need to release anger, resentment and hostility, for which love, forgiveness and compassion are the antidotes. Kapha people must let go of greed and attachment, which requires clarity and detachment. To do this we must really perceive the danger of these emotions and have the will to go beyond them. This requires the cultivation of intelligence and observation.

SELF-IMAGE

We must learn to question and release any negative attitudes about ourselves we may have; that we are sick, worthless, unhappy, unintelligent, unspiritual, can never get well, that we are to be blamed or guilty etc.

We must first have an idea of ourselves as a spiritual being; a being that has incarnated in order to grow in love and wisdom. We must view ourselves not as an ego, a transient separate self seeking sensate fulfillment, but a soul; a portion of the eternal seeking to express itself in creation. We must acknowledge our mistakes but not limit ourselves to them. We must take them as challenges to improve our condition.

Vata people must give up a negative self-idea, that they are weak, afraid or isolated, agitated or disturbed. Kapha people usually have to take on some form of atonement and give up an idea of themselves that rests too much upon what they possess, their identity support of home, family, culture, country etc. They often have to challenge a false sense of self-content. Pitta people need to reduce the need to achieve and take power, a self-image that depends on making others look worse than ourselves or dominating situations.

WORLD-IDEA

We must learn to question and release our idea of the world, particularly our negative ideas about life. We must learn that the world is what we make of it, individually and collectively. We must open up to the real universe that is the creative play of consciousness.

We must first see our personal problem in the context of the human race and life as a whole. All human beings have similar problems, physical and mental suffering, as we do. All living beings, including animals and plants, do so as well. Hence the solution to this problem is not personal.

Vata people need to give up their idea of the world as a harsh and unsupportive place filled with clashing and disturbing energies they have to constantly try to adjust to. They may need to cease

viewing the world as a constantly changing chaos. Pitta types need to give up their idea of the world as a place for them to gain power or recognition, a field for them to shine. Kapha people need to give up their idea of the world as a place for them to accumulate things, a field for their greed and need for security.

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AYURVEDIC COUNSELING

Ayurvedic medicine, like other holistic approaches, and as an educational approach to health, involves a great deal of counseling.

There is general life-style counseling based upon methods of constitution balancing, health maintenance and disease prevention. This often involves psychological considerations, personal and human issues of spirituality, career, relationship, environment and so on.

There is also the counseling approach of Ayurvedic and Yoga psychology for dealing with mental and emotional problems or their involvement in the disease process. All diseases involve a good deal of pain and uncertainty which will have its affect upon the mind. Hence we always have to consider the mental factor for both the disease and its treatment.

THERAPIST/CLIENT INTERCHANGE

There is, moreover, the general interchange between healer and client, which involves a need for knowledge of different psychologies and often requires a great deal of diplomacy.

It is not how much we know, or how skillful we are, that usually determines the reaction of our clients, but how we present ourselves and what kind of rapport we create with them. This does not mean that we should try to be too personal or caring with everyone. The most important thing is the respect the client has for the therapist. We can lose respect with patients by being too familiar with them. We gain it when we exhibit confidence and firm principles in what we do and do not allow ourselves to be influenced by our clients, but at the same time are sensitive to them as human beings.

It is also not how much we know or how well we can diagnose and treat our patients that is the measure of our efficacy. It is in how effective we are in getting them to take responsibility for their own health and spiritual evolution.

We must also learn to respect our patients, to give regard to the Divine spirit within them and their freedom to learn. To do this we must have confidentiality in our dealings with them. We should not disclose their problems or gossip about them. We must respect the Purusha, the inner individuality within them.

The most important thing is to explain what Ayurveda is, its power and its relevance. Once a certain faith or understanding of Ayurveda is created then treatment will be much easier. This may be particularly helpful in the beginning when we do not have confidence in ourselves and have not established a strong identity in the work we do.

We should remember that we do not have to be perfect in what we know or do, but if what we have to offer can help others, if it improves the field of available therapies then we can feel confident in giving it and also feel that we deserve adequate compensation for it.

Unless there is fair reciprocation for our services then those who we dispense them to will not appreciate them and will not be able to use them in a truly beneficial manner even for themselves. Most free treatment, for this reason, is not helpful and often causes our services to be devalued. If we do not value ourselves and what we do, then others will not be able to find value in it. In our culture this value is determined monetarily or in terms of some equal work or service done in exchange. While the high fees of modern medicine are unethical from the spiritual perspective of Ayurveda, respect for natural methods of healing and healers must be demonstrated if their methods are to work.

We must always stress that Ayurveda gives us the tools for health but we ourselves have to implement them. The Ayurvedic practitioner is not some magical healer who solves our problems for us (many of our problems are caused by looking for such types) but one who guides us in our own self treatment. Health is our own responsibility and no one else can achieve it for us. Nor is anyone else to be blamed if we do not have it. If we teach this many wrong expectations will be avoided in what we do.

In this regard we can distinguish between 'active' and 'passive' therapies. Passive therapies are what another does for us or something, like a pill, that we just take. Active therapies are those we do on ourselves and must implement ourselves like right diet, right exercise and right life-style. Ayurveda as self-care is primarily an active therapy and its efficacy is largely in providing us tools to take care of our own health. This we must make clear to our clients.

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The constitutional types of Ayurveda give us a good basis for dealing with different personality types and can be used for purposes of counseling therapies as well. We outline their basic characteristics as patients in the following:

VATA PATIENTS

Vata types are apt to be afraid. They often appear nervous, upset or distracted. They may be hesitant, insecure and may exhibit this by moving around a lot or fidgeting. They find it hard to settle down. They may have many doubts about themselves or the treatment.

Sometimes they are over enthusiastic and excited and expect too much. They may be acting out of some momentary whim that may have no real motivation behind it. They are often ungrounded and can be hard to deal with. So we first of all have to get them more realistic about their condition and the effort that may be required to correct it. We must bring them back to earth.

Vata types will often have a negative attitude about themselves. They will have more worries and negative imaginations about their disease condition. They will tend to think it is worse than it is and may think they have some severe disease like cancer. They are more commonly hypochondriacs. We need to help them to calm their minds as part of the treatment.

On the other hand, they may feel instantly better but it is not likely to endure. Their condition will tend to fluctuate along with their thoughts.

They often seek comfort and require a lot of assurance but the more you tell them, the more information they have to think and worry about, the less secure they tend to feel. Hence one should be confident and firm with them but not be drawn into long discussions with them. They may want to talk to you for an hour but this will not be of any great help to them. It is better to give them a few practical things to do to improve their condition and have them come back later once they have implemented them. This will foster a practical attitude in them for dealing with their condition and not feed their excessive mental activity.

They can be so caught up in their problem they do not take the time for the actions to change. They can be looking so hard for external assurance that they do not do the things to take control of their own lives. Hence we need to emphasize action rather than theory and learning through action as a way of arriving at certainty. We must be careful not to give them too much advise.

Vata types are very changeable. They may quickly switch therapies or combine several at once. They are most common to be late or to miss appointments. Sometimes they are so changeable that they will not continue even if the treatment is going well. We must emphasize consistency in action for what they do; that it is better to do one thing consistently and regularly than many things in a transient and superficial manner.

PITTA PATIENTS

Pitta types generally think they know who they are and what they are doing. They are most likely to tell you what you should do for them. They will often tell you what their condition is. It is important to establish your control of the situation and not allow them to take the lead.

They tend to be somewhat critical, sometimes contentious or aggressive. Hence they may question your credentials or may question what Ayurveda is. They like authority, status and hierarchy so you may have to show them in some way the validity of your background or your methodology, which should be done simply and objectively. They may expect you to heal them or may judge you unfit as a healer. They may expect you to convince them of what you can accomplish. It is best not to be drawn into any debate with them. The more we try to justify ourselves or our knowledge to them, the more they will be inclined to doubt us. If they are not receptive to the treatment it cannot work for them anyway.

It is best to deal with them in a very objective and rational way and turn their critical nature back on themselves so that they can use it to understand the cause of their disease and correct it. This does not mean to become critical of them, as this would only cause them to react in self-defense. It means to awaken their discrimination to help them take control of their own lives. To do this we may have to demonstrate the rationality of our approach to them, with convincing arguments etc.

Pitta types respond to friendliness. Their fiery nature can be mitigated by a cool, calm and pleasant circumstance. They must feel that we are on their side and will work well in harmony with a person or principles they see as authoritative.

Once a Pitta type knows what to do and understands the effort they themselves must make, they are usually very good, the best of the three types, in implementing things. They may even be excessive or fanatical in what they do and so must be kept moderate in their actions so that they do not burn themselves out by attempting too much.

But they are also the most likely to respond at some point with anger or criticism if things do not go as well as they expect. Hence responsibility must be put on their shoulders and we should not promise them too much.

KAPHA PATIENTS

Kapha types need to be stimulated, motivated or even shocked to get well. They are often lazy, slow to act and find it hard to implement things. They tend to flow with their own inertia. They should not need to be comforted, though they may seek it. Their sentimentality about their condition must be understood as one of the factors which causes it.

Nor is it enough to explain to them very clearly their problem and how to rectify it. They need an additional push. Often we need to warn them, even scare them, to make them really take heed of what they are doing to themselves. We may have to paint very vividly for them the negative effects if they do not change. This is the opposite of Vata types who need to be given calm and peace and a positive attitude first.

Kapha types require time and patience. They may be bewildered by too much information. They respond better to love and personal care but along with firmness and the insistence that they do certain things. They may just indulge in good feelings if we let them and go back to their old habits.

On the other hand, they may need more frequent appointments or more constant interchange to stimulate them to get started. Once started they will usually continue well on their own accord but need occasional new motivation. This is opposite Vata that starts well but quits early.

VATA-PITTA PATIENTS

Vata-Pitta types easily move from fear to anger and back again. If something does not make them afraid, it makes them mad. They can be highly volatile and very hard to deal with.

They require a great deal of tact and patience. They may just be looking for someone to unload their negativity upon. Often their energy reserves and immune system (kapha) is not good. Hence they find it difficult to take any questioning or criticism. They often have fear and much suppressed anger. They require much nurturing, patience and consideration (kapha). Usually they are highly intelligent, however, and once they are calm and feel supported can effectively implement a line of treatment in their lives.

PITTA-KAPHA PATIENTS

Pitta-Kapha types have both energy and stability. For this reason they have good resistance and are often healthy. They are often strong and content in who they are and what they do. If they are looking for an alternative therapy it is often for health enhancement or improving energy.

They lack in adaptability and flexibility (Vata). They often want to be dominating and controlling and tend to be conservative and possessive. They require more movement, activity, creativity and new challenges.

VATA-KAPHA PATIENTS

Vata-Kapha types lack energy, motivation, passion, enthusiasm (Pitta). They are often weak, passive, dependent, hypersensitive,

extremely yin. They will agree with what is told to them but will lack the energy to put it into action. They are both emotionally and mentally (nervously) easily disturbed. They often possess amorphous or chameleon personalities and will appear as you want them to be.

One often has to be probing with them but in a delicate and sensitive nature. They respond to warmth and firmness but it is often hard to tell exactly what they are really doing with the treatment if anything at all. We have to learn to see through them and help them gain clarity and practicality in their life style.

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GENERAL ATTITUDE OF THE PATIENT

It is important to first of all judge the sincerity of the patient. Some individuals do not really want to get well and nothing anyone does for them can work as long as they have this attitude (which they usually refuse to acknowledge).

We have most sicknesses because we want them and in some way either enjoy them or are attached to them. The negative drama of being sick can be a great way to get attention or become important. Hence much of the time when we are sick we do not really want to get well. We are simply feeding off the attention our illness gives. Going to various practitioners can be more a way of gaining attention than a means of really dealing with our condition.

When we encounter people with this attitude we must first deal with it or their illusions will negate the treatment. Hence we must also determine whether they are looking for us to heal them or help them heal themselves. Our culture as a whole is suffering from a doctor as priest or guru complex that encourages such attitudes.

We must often first ask people probing questions. Do you really want to get well? Are you in any way attached to your disease or using it as an escape in life? Are you willing to take the time, effort and expense to really get well? Are you interested in really correcting your condition yourself or are you just seeking temporary symptomatic relief that allows you to continue on as you are? Are you willing to take responsibility for your condition and change it or are you looking for someone else to do it for you?

This is necessary to awaken the intelligence of our clients and to get them to be willing to make the effort to improve their condition.

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PART III. LESSON 10

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. How do the humors manifest from the threefold nature of consciousness?
2. What are the three forms of knowledge?
3. What are the five mental activities?
4. How are impressions, emotions, beliefs about oneself and beliefs about the world food for the different levels of the mind?
5. What are some methods for improving the quality of our impressions?
6. What is the only emotion we can really digest?
7. Why is it important to change our beliefs about ourselves and the world?
8. Why is the right orientation of the healer-patient relationship so critical to the outcome of treatment?
9. What is the basic psychology of Vata-Pitta types? of Pitta-Kapha types? of Vata-Kapha types?
10. What is the difference between active and passive therapies?

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PART III. LESSON 11

SECTION 3. ADVANCED TREATMENT METHODS

Now that we have a background in the treatment methods of Ayurveda, we are going to explore the different levels of Ayurvedic therapies. We have learned how the biological humors accumulate in the physical body and how they can be treated. In this lesson we will examine how to treat them on the more subtle levels of our nature.

ACCUMULATION AND REDUCTION OF THE DOSHAS

The essence of Yoga and Ayurveda is to aid us in developing our own direct perception, immediate experience and creative process in life. To do this we must be willing to observe the factors within and around us which promote balance or imbalance. This requires that we are able to objectively observe both the qualities we are exposed to and those we develop by our own action. Such an application of creative intelligence is the basis of spiritual living. Please examine such factors in your own life and see what you are actually setting in motion and what the results of that must be in time.

We have already explained how the Doshas accumulate in the digestive system, each at its respective site; Vata in the large intestine, Pitta in the small, Kapha in the stomach. This addresses the main way in which the Doshas increase in the physical body or food sheath. However, there are other and more subtle levels at which the Doshas accumulate and can cause both physical and mental diseases. The inner levels, according to our prime principle, outweigh the outer levels in producing diseases. Hence if we only consider the outer level of accumulation we may not be able to find the real source of our problems. If we only treat a disease at the outer level we may not be able to cure it or our cure will be incomplete.

These additional levels are 1) the skin, 2) the breath, 3) the senses, 4) the emotions, and 5) thought.

THE DISEASE PATHWAYS

The skin relates to the outer surface of the physical body, just as the digestive system relates to the inner canal. As the

latter relates to the internal disease pathway (antar marga), the skin relates to the external disease pathway (bahya marga), the plasma and blood. These define the spatial limits of the body. What is between them is the central disease pathway (madhyama marga), the deeper tissues of muscle, fat, bone, marrow and semen.

Each of the three disease pathways has its own level and form of accumulation of the Doshas. For the inner disease pathway wrong diet and poor eating practices cause this accumulation to take place. For the outer disease pathway it is wrong exposure to the elements and wrong care of the skin. For the central disease pathway it is mismanagement of the sexual energy and disharmony of the nervous system, including intake of negative impressions.

THE SKIN----

The three humors accumulate directly on the level of the skin. The surface of our body is being constantly exposed to environmental factors which can aggravate the Doshas. Hence it is not enough just to consider the diet in the accumulation of the Doshas. For example, an anti-Vata diet or herbs may not cure a Vata disease if Vata is still allowed to accumulate on the skin through exposure to cold or wind.

Environmental factors and climate must be taken into consideration. In this regard, we must consider the clothing we wear, the soap or cosmetics we use, whether we apply oil to the skin or whether we get the proper massage and exercise.

VATA

Vata qualities like dryness, coldness, roughness and lightness cause Vata to accumulate in the skin. From the skin it is transferred via plasma and blood to the muscles and bones and causes various Vata disorders like arthritis and nervous system disorders. Such factors are exposure to wind, cold weather, dryness, drafts, wearing of too little clothing, wearing of rough clothing, harsh or rough massage, allowing the skin to become too dry (as in using abrasive or drying soaps). Dietary factors like too dry diet or lack of fluid intake will also have an affect here.

Vata in the skin is reduced by the application of opposite qualities like oiliness and heat--hence the importance of oil massage in the treatment of Vata. Best are warm, heavy, moistening oils like sesame prepared with strong tonic herbs like ashwagandha, bala and shatavari. Many essential oils are good, particularly those of a warming nature like camphor, cinnamon, eucalyptus or wintergreen. Mild diaphoretics along with tonics are good like ginger and ashwagandha or cinnamon and licorice tea. Vata people should wear adequate clothing and keep the skin properly oiled and moisturized.

PITTA

Pitta qualities like heat, oiliness and lightness cause Pitta to accumulate in the skin. From the skin it is transferred via the plasma and blood and causes various Pitta disorders like inflammatory skin diseases and toxic blood conditions. Such factors include exposure to heat, fire, sunlight, heaters, as well as the usual Pitta increasing dietary habits. Keeping the skin too oily or exposure to toxins (poison oak or poison ivy, for example) are additional factors, as also wearing clothing that is too warm. Any essential oils applied to the skin may aggravate Pitta.

Pitta in the skin is reduced by opposite qualities like the application of cold. Such factors include exposure to cool breezes, moonlight, cool showers, massage with cool and light oils like coconut, ghee or sunflower. Alterative herbs like aloe gel, dandelion or burdock can be helpful, internally and externally. Pitta types should dress cool but wear adequate clothing to protect themselves from the sun (like long sleeve shirts in summer).

KAPHA

Kapha qualities like coldness, dampness and heaviness cause Kapha to accumulate in the skin. From there it is transferred via the plasma and blood and causes various Kapha disorders like edema and lung diseases. Such factors include exposure to cold, damp, environments, living near water or the ocean, application of oils and oily cosmetics, as well as Kapha increasing diet.

It is reduced by such qualities as heat, dryness and lightness. These can be increased by rough massage or massage with dry powders, dry saunas, exposure to sun, fire, heat, warm breezes--hence the importance of sweating therapy (svedana) in treating Kapha. Diaphoretic teas like cinnamon and ginger are good to keep Kapha from increasing in the skin. Kapha types should wear adequate clothing but which provides good ventilation.

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THE BREATH AND THE BREATH SHEATH (PRANAMAYA KOSHA)----

The breath relates to the Prana and the Pranic sheath. It mediates between the body and the mind. It is connected to the lungs, the respiratory system and the skin. It comes after the skin as a level of accumulation. It not only affects the outer disease pathway, the plasma and the blood, in addition it connects to the central disease pathway (madhyama marga) through the nervous system. This is why Pranayama can be used to bring toxins from the central to the outer disease pathway to facilitate their elimination from the body. The breath links the body and the mind. It can be used to treat the disorders of either and to reestablish the connection between both, which is usually impaired in the disease process.

MOVEMENT OF THE DOSHAS THROUGH THE BREATH

VATA

Vata increases by breathing practices that are shallow, rapid, irregular, light, by agitated breathing and by failure to breathe. It is increased by breathing in of light, dry or cold air or air devoid of Prana (like unventilated rooms). Vata is reduced by deep, slow, full and regular breathing and by breathing in of moist, fresh, warm air. Other factors are the use of the neti pot and application of oils to the nose and ears. Vata people need to practice daily deep breathing to increase their vitality.

Vatogenic emotions like fear and anxiety disturb the breath and cause Vata to accumulate on this level. Excess or agitated speaking will also derange Vata via the breath.

PITTA

Pitta increases by breathing practices that are rapid or forceful and by breathing in of hot or oily air, smoke or toxic fumes. Pitta is reduced by breathing of cool and slightly dry air, and by calm, slow deep breathing. Other factors are cooling forms of nasya (nasal therapy), like the application of brahmi oil to the nose.

Pittogenic emotions like anger and irritability also vitiate the breath, as well as shouting or quarreling.

KAPHA

Kapha increases by breathing practices that are slow, by sedentary life-style, by the failure to entirely empty the lungs and by breathing in of air that is cold, damp, heavy or stagnant. Kapha is reduced by strong, rapid breathing or by breathing in of warm, dry and light air, and also by strong exercise. The drying forms of nasya, like snuffing calamus or ginger powder are helpful.

Kaphogenic emotions like attachment and grief vitiate the breath, along with failure to speak out and express oneself.

*****

THE SENSES----

Through the senses we take in impressions which feed the mind, breath and nervous system. Impressions that are natural and pure feed the positive life-force (prana). They strengthen the mind, emotion and immune system and increase sattva. Those which are unnatural, artificial and impure increase the negative life-force or the death energy (apana). They derange the mind and emotions and reduce our resistance to disease. They increase rajas and tamas within us. Such negative impressions include living in the city, mass media influences like sex and violence, rock music, television, movies, eating food that is too rich or overly spiced. Disturbed emotional or work environments also contribute.

The impressions we take in feed the mind and the vital force. They become the fabric of the subconscious and create the psychic field in which we live. It is important, therefore, to be conscious of our impressions and to consciously construct our impressions in life for the maximum development of consciousness.

As long as we are taking in predominately negative impressions in life, our physical and mental health and well-being will be limited. Even if we have the right diet or other right life-style regimes, they may not be enough to compensate. Hence we should all seek our daily or weekly intake of positive impressions. The best way to do this is by spending time in nature. Another important way is through art, particularly that of a spiritual or religious nature, which elevates the soul. Pujas, homas, rituals, pilgrimages, chanting, devotional singing, contemplation of the forms of Gods and Goddesses etc. are very helpful in this regard.

PRATYAHARA

The Yogic method of controlling the senses and developing positive impressions is called "Pratyahara", which is withdrawal from distraction. This includes learning to control the mind so that it is not carried away by the influence of the senses. This is done by cultivating detachment to sensory impulses. This does not mean to struggle with our senses but to learn to observe the objects of the senses rather than react to them.

We should not be ruled by our senses. If our eye leads us to look at something, our tongue to eat something, our ears to hear something, we are simply allowing our senses to tell us what to do. This itself is a loss of Prana, a dispersion of our vitality. It is a form of fragmentation and can only lead to negative experiences in time and prevent us from becoming masters of our own lives and destinies.

The second part of Pratyahara is to create positive impressions within the mind itself through mantra and visualization. These give us control of the imaging power of the mind which operates through the senses. We can visualize various colors, objects, deities or geometrical patterns (yantras and mandalas), along with repeating the mantras which relate to these. (It is too complex a matter to deal with here but each of the Doshas have those which are better for it) It also can allow the subtle senses to come into play and give us the perception of the inner energies behind things. In this way the contemplation of inner sounds (nada) and lights, which a number of yoga teachings emphasize, are forms of Pratyahara.

ACCUMULATION OF THE DOSHAS THROUGH THE SENSES

VATA

Vata relates to the ears and the skin. It is aggravated by harsh, loud, rough, irregular or agitated sound and touch. Noisy environments primarily aggravate Vata. This includes too much talking, chattering, shouting, crying, singing. Factors of touch which aggravate Vata are strong massage, strong exercise or injurious blows. Vata is damaged by too many stimulating impressions, particularly those of an artificial nature. It is reduced by soft, soothing, calm, quiet, regular and peaceful sounds and touches.

Indian music or western classical music can be helpful in this regard. The silence of nature or the sounds of water, like streams or the sea, can be good. Gentle and warm touch and the usual oil massage are helpful. Application of medicated oils to the ears can be helpful (calamus, gotu kola). Chanting of calm and peaceful mantras is another method.

PITTA

Pitta relates to sight and color. It is aggravated by bright, warm, colorful and sharp sights and lights; for example, by neon lights, metallic colors, harsh reds and blacks. It is reduced by cool, mild, soothing scenes and visions, including flowers, lakes and the sky, by white, green and blue colors. Pitta types should contemplate peaceful forms of the Gods and Goddesses. They can meditate upon the sea or the sky, or snow white mountain peaks. Looking at the stars or the crescent moon at night can be helpful. They should look at the sky at night. Application of ghee or cooling oils and herbs to the eyes is also helpful (like chrysanthemum, eyebright or camomile).

KAPHA

Kapha relates to the tongue and the nose. It is aggravated by sweet, salty and sour tastes, by food that is too rich, greasy or heavy, and by overly sweet fragrances and perfumes. Kapha people do well by fasting and by use of spices (this is covered under diet). They do well avoiding perfumes except those fragrances which are penetrating like camphor, wintergreen, eucalyptus, musk, myrrh, frankincense, cedar or sage. They should avoid sweet sensations and cultivate more austerity or absence of sensation. Sensory fasts can be helpful, as in silent meditations. They can meditate upon fire.

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EMOTIONS----

All negative emotions serve to aggravate the Doshas. They disturb the mind and damage sattva, the mental virtue. They are the

primary factors in mental and physical disease and in the ignorance that keeps our soul bound to the outer world.

Certain emotions increase certain Doshas. As already indicated in the course, fear generally increases Vata, anger increases Pitta and attachment increases Kapha. Even in the absence of physical accumulation factors the Doshas can be accumulated on the level of the mind alone and thereby overflow and damage the physical body. Emotions cannot always be separated from mental attitudes which often engender them. These are ignorance and fear, ego and anger, belief and attachment.

THE PLACE OF SATTVA IN EMOTIONS

Sattva is the natural harmony, purity and clarity of the mind. It is damaged by negative emotions as all of these have a rajasic, disturbed or agitated quality. It is damaged by ignorance, lack of attention and carelessness which are tamasic. An important principle we must always remember is: *Whenever sattva, which is balance, is damaged the biological humors are also thrown out of balance.*

It is possible to use one emotion to counter another. For example, if someone is afraid we may help them overcome their fear by arousing their anger or appealing to their pride. If they are afraid of the dark we can challenge them by calling them a coward. This, however, may be temporary and superficial in its results because it takes us only from one negative emotion to another. It may reduce aggravated humors, for example, fear turning to anger may help reduce Vata, but it is only a preliminary measure. The correct method is to counter a negative emotion with a positive feeling; for example, hatred with love.

SATTVA

Emotions That Reduce Sattva----

All Negative Emotions

Desire, Fear, Anger, Greed, Attachment, Anxiety, Hatred, Lust, Envy, Jealousy, Pride, Grief, Sorrow

Emotions That Increase Sattva----

All Positive Feelings

Love, Compassion, Devotion, Faith, Contentment, Modesty, Forgiveness, Peace, Courage, Joy

VATA

Emotions That Aggravate Vata----

Fear, Fright, Anxiety, Insecurity, Dependency

Feelings That Reduce Vata----

Love, Peace, Faith, Courage, Fearlessness

PITTA
Emotions That Aggravate Pitta----
Anger, Hatred, Envy, Jealousy, Suspicion, Pride
Feelings That Reduce Pitta----
Love, Compassion, Peace, Forgiveness, Modesty

KAPHA
Emotions That Aggravate Kapha----
Greed, Attachment, Lust, Possessiveness, Sentimentality
Feelings That Reduce Kapha----
Contentment, Modesty, Courage, Detachment

We should note that most negative emotions have some original positive function in nature. For example, it is right for us to become afraid if we find a snake nearby us. Here the emotional functioning is biological or practical. It is the psychological emotions that become negative, fear for our ego and our attachments, desire for personal gratification, etc. These are sustained by memory and based on our self-image. They are reduced by opening up to a greater reality than the me and the mine. It is not the emotion that is the problem but the ego which is attached to them.

*****

THOUGHT----

Certain thought processes also vitiate sattva and aggravate the Doshas. All self-centered thought damages sattva, which is only renewed by silence of mind. Thoughtlessness (lack of attention), however, is tamasic in nature and also damages sattva.

Vata people tend to by hypersensitive and defensive in their minds. This causes fear and worry, uncertainty, insecurity and indecisiveness. Pitta people are overly sharp and heated in their minds. This causes a critical, destructive, fanatical and negative mental attitude. Kapha people are slow and deliberate, plodding and attached to one point of view. This shuts down the mental process and promotes resistance, dullness and lethargy.

VATA

Vata is aggravated by excess and wasteful mental activity like worry and too much calculation about things. Excess activity and changeability in the mind, doubt, hesitation, disturbed thoughts, distracted attention are additional Vata aggravating factors. Vata people should not read too many newspapers or magazines, for example, or watch several television programs at the same time, as

these agitate Vata in the mind. They should avoid too many factors that overstimulate the mind or make it more mobile, including too much exposure to the mass media. They should contemplate truth principles and avoid the trivia of information, statistics and superficial ideas. They should spend time contemplating the beauty and power of nature.

PITTA

Pitta is aggravated by competitive attitudes in the mind, by an overly critical, argumentative or contentious disposition, by fault finding, blaming and negativity and by impatience. Pitta people should not dwell on the faults of others, but should learn to see the good in all. They should use their critical intelligence to discover the truth of life, not to become overly concerned about the details of the outer world. They need to learn to turn the flame of the mind within, not to use it against others. They should learn to redirect their power of speech towards a connection with the Divine Word or word of truth.

KAPHA

Kapha is aggravated by lack of mental activity, by dullness, inertia, mental laziness, lack of focus, daydreaming, fantasizing, sedentary activity. Kapha people need to maintain alertness and focus in the mind. They should read and study more and keep their minds in motion. It can be helpful for them to learn languages or to try to write. They need to strive towards a clear mental self-expression and learn to discriminate between feelings and ideas. It may be helpful for them to practice concentration, as for example trataka, gazing at a ghee lamp.

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SUMMARY

Usually any aggravation of the Doshas in our outer nature, like wrong diet, reflects an inner imbalance, like wrong thoughts or negative emotions. The optimum way to treat the Doshas is to seek to reduce them on all levels and to give each level its right priority and appropriate treatment.

Generally the mind and emotions are most important, followed by the senses and the breath, and third the skin and the body (diet). However, each case has to be examined specifically and the main factor may lie on any level. For example, a person with aggravated Vata may have their condition caused primarily by a constant exposure to high levels of noise in their work environment. Without correcting that specifically their condition cannot be expected to improve.

Hence in the examination and diagnosis of a patient outline all these different levels of accumulation and check to see their pattern. Don't just look to diet or herbs. Don't seek complex physical remedial measures when some simple change of attitudes may be more effective.

The breath and the senses are of special importance as they are the link between body and mind. Through the breath and the senses we can influence the mind. It is not always possible to correct a condition on its own level. We can sometimes do this by treating the level below or above it, or wherever there is access. If a person cannot change their diet much, we can perhaps compensate for this if they can adopt certain breathing exercises, for example.

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PART III. LESSON 11

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What are the different levels on which the Doshas can accumulate?
2. How can we treat Vata on the level of the skin?
3. What is Pratyahara and how can we use it therapeutically?
4. What serve as the link between the body and mind?
5. How does Kapha accumulate on the level of the breath?
6. What kind of mental activity aggravates Vata?
7. Why is it important to examine all the different levels of accumulation for the Doshas?

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PART III. LESSON 12

TREATMENT METHODS AND THE SEVEN TISSUE ELEMENTS (DHATUS) AND THE CHANNEL SYSTEMS (SROTAS)

This section outlines a comprehensive treatment of disease through all the tissues and systems of the body, primarily herbal but also considering other factors.

While we treat the Dosha or biological humor in the disease process, we must also consider the relevant tissues and systems affected. We should employ the whole spectrum of treatment methods we have learned. Herbs and foods are the most obvious. They treat the tissues through the digestive process. In this respect they all work on the plasma (rasa dhatu) from the inside (g.i. tract) and through it go to the other tissues. Foods work more through gross, herbs through subtle nutrition. Some herbs and foods increase the tissue, others decrease it. Some stimulate its activity (the tissue system), some lower or sedate it. Some are specific for eliminating one of the humors from the tissue.

Exercises affect the tissues and systems in different ways. They can move them and thereby increase their function. They can aid in removing blockages from within them. Generally their effect is stimulating and reducing.

Other methods can work on the tissues directly. For example, oil massage to the skin works directly on the plasma from the outside. The right use of impressions similarly can directly treat the nerve tissue. We should keep in mind both direct and indirect methods, those that work primarily on a tissue itself and those which affect it through the treatment of the entire body.

The following methods are suggestive not exhaustive and should be expanded by the student in a creative and intelligent manner.

1. RASA/ PLASMA----

All foods and herbs (anything that goes through the digestive process, including water) work on the plasma as it is the basic tissue element of the body through which their action is absorbed and communicated to all the other tissues.

Most anti-Kapha herbs work here, including stimulants and expectorants. Kapha is the waste material of the plasma which in excess indicates vitiation of the tissue. Anti-Kapha regimes cleanse the plasma.

FOR REDUCING THE PLASMA:

Indicated are warming, usually pungent expectorants and diaphoretics like elecampane, bayberry, sage, thyme, ginger, cardamom, cinnamon, cloves.

Also useful are bitter/astringent usually cooling expectorants, alteratives and lymphatic cleansers like echinacea, yellow dock, mullein, yarrow, burdock, vasa.

While some diuretics can be helpful, their role should be secondary. Good are juniper berries, cubebs, cinnamon, lemon grass, coriander; those which also have diaphoretic action.

Generally the amount of water and fluid intake has to be reduced along with salt. Sweet, oily, greasy and sticky food should not be taken.

Sweating therapy, sometimes strong, can be useful with dry saunas being best. Sweating cleanses and reduces the plasma. Aerobic exercise, like running, is generally good, or any strong exercise that promotes sweating.

FOR INCREASING THE PLASMA:

Demulcents are specific like milk, shatavari, licorice, marshmallow, slippery elm, comfrey root, rehmannia, ophiopogon. They are particularly useful in convalescence from febrile diseases which have depleted or burnt up the plasma. The plasma as the basic water of the body is the main tissue damaged by fevers.

Sour herbs like lemon, lime, amalaki, passion fruit are helpful, particularly if taken with small amount of salt. Generally the amount of water in the system has to be increased. Sweet fruit juices like grape, watermelon, pineapple and coconut do well. Raw sugars are helpful in the diet (not honey). Dry and heavy food should be avoided, like beans and corn. Creamy soups are good or rice gruel, or seaweed soups.

External applications of oils, particularly sesame is useful. Strong exercise, exposure to the sun and wind, should be avoided. Swimming or frequent baths can be helpful. Wearing of pearl can be helpful.

FOR VATA IN THE PLASMA (Rasagata Vata)
(as in dry, itchy skin diseases):

Use the plasma increasing demulcents with a small amount of spices like ginger, cinnamon, cardamom or cloves to facilitate their digestion. Sour juices with salt are also useful.

A mild sweating therapy can be done, just enough sweat to moisten the skin. Fresh ginger or cinnamon are usually strong enough for this. Any stronger sweating therapies or exercise that causes pronounced sweating should be avoided.

Emphasis should be on oleation therapy (svedana). Externally sesame and other medicated oils (like Mahanarayan Tail) can be applied. Best sites are the back, head and soles of the feet.

Anti-Vata diet should be followed but avoiding too many hot spices or food that is too heavy. Fluid intake should be increased. One should avoid using soap that is drying in nature.

FOR PITTA IN THE PLASMA (Rasagata Pitta)

(as in inflammatory skin diseases, lymphatic infections, severe sore throat):

Use cooling expectorants, alteratives and lymphatic cleansers specifically echinacea. It may be good to add some plasma increasing demulcents when there is more thirst and dryness (like shatavari or marshmallow). Milk is a good drink for this condition.

Useful herbs are burdock, yarrow, horsetail, elder flowers, yellow dock, mint.

The area of inflammation can be washed with aloe gel, bitter decoctions (like golden seal or katuka), turmeric or cooling oils like coconut and ghee. Heavier oils like sesame should not be applied, nor should oily cosmetics be used.

Exposure of the skin to sun, heat and fire should be avoided, as well as aerobic exercise.

FOR KAPHA IN THE PLASMA (Rasagata Kapha)

(as in chronic swollen glands or damp oozy skin conditions):

The plasma reducing therapy is mainly indicated. Use the pungent plasma cleansing herbs with some of the bitter/astringent ones when fever and infection are more pronounced. Mustard is particularly good, as is horseradish.

Trikatu or hot spices like ginger, cloves and cinnamon are good. Strong aromatics like camphor, wintergreen, eucalyptus, bayberry, sage or mint can be used.

Oils should generally not be used except smaller amounts of mustard or flaxseed oils. Aromatic herbs in their essential oil (camphor, eucalyptus, etc.) in a rubbing alcohol base are good. The area can be washed with infusions of these same pungent herbs also, or a dry powder massage as with calamus is good. Ginger paste can be applied to the site.

Stronger sweating therapy can be done with possible use of strong diaphoretics like ma huang. Aerobic exercise again is good. But strong methods should not be used if the kidneys are also weak. Oily cosmetics should be avoided.

2.
RAKTA/ BLOOD----

Many herbs work on the blood; particularly those which relate to Pitta. This is because Pitta is the waste material of the blood.

FOR CLEANSING THE BLOOD:

Most alteratives work well here. Typical ones are dandelion,

barberry, golden seal, violet, plantain, burdock, red clover, yarrow, manjishta.

The diet should avoid red meat, greasy and oily foods, fried foods, sugars, pastries, salt, sour articles like pickles and vinegar, alcohol. Salads, green herbs and vegetables, and mung beans are good articles in the diet. Heat and saunas should be avoided.

FOR STIMULATING BLOOD FLOW (for treating stagnant blood):

Many emmenagogues (menstruation promoting herbs) are useful here like arjuna, guggul, saffron, turmeric, myrrh, salvia, rose, hawthorn berries, motherwort, pennyroyal, rosemary.

These herbs are useful for clearing blood clots, preventing scarring of tissue, aiding in the healing of damaged tissue (particularly those damaged by trauma), for reducing cholesterol and arteriosclerosis, and for reducing tumors.

The diet should be light, like the blood cleansing therapy.

FOR REVIVING THE CIRCULATION (improving the pulse):

Cayenne, cinnamon, ginger, garlic, aconite (purified), makaradhwaj, ruby ash or tincture, or camphor (in the proper dosage) are all strong. Basically any very hot spice or strong stimulant is good, even a short term use of coffee.

The diet should be light, hot and tonifying. Gems like ruby or garnet set in gold are good. Pranayama is very helpful.

FOR DECREASING BLOOD FLOW:

Hemostatics (stopping bleeding) and vulnerary herbs are indicated like alum, alum root, oak bark, plantain, manjishta, pseudoginseng, agrimony, cattail, plantain, blessed thistle.

Application of ice or cold packs is good. These same herbs can be applied externally in pastes and poultices. Food should generally be cool and light (generally anti-Pitta).

FOR INCREASING THE BLOOD:

Blood tonics are useful like amalaki, shatavari, lycium berries, dang gui, fo ti (he shou wu), rehmannia, comfrey root. Saffron milk decoctions are good.

Iron preparations (loha bhasmas), blackstrap molasses and iron containing fruit and vegetables are useful. Other good foods include black grapes, pomegranate, carrots, beets, yams, aduki beans. Oils like sesame and ghee (particularly turmeric ghee) are good.

Red meat can be useful in extreme conditions but tends to build a poorer quality or more toxic blood. Bone marrow soup can be employed in the same way. Red gem stones can be useful like ruby, garnet, red coral, carnelian.

FOR VATA IN THE BLOOD (Raktagata Vata)
(conditions like anemia, gout):

Again mainly the blood increasing approach is good. Blood tonics like amalaki, shatavari, dang gui are good, along with mild or warm (not too cold) alteratives like sarsaparilla, sassafras, cinnamon, garlic, saffron, safflower, turmeric to cleanse the blood.

FOR PITTA IN THE BLOOD (Raktagata Pitta)
(conditions like boils, carbuncles, hepatitis, anemia, bleeding disorders):

Standard alteratives and antiseptics apply here like echinacea, golden seal, katuka, guduchi, red clover, yellow dock, honeysuckle, manjishta, turmeric, saffron, salvia. These are best in acute and febrile conditions.

In more debilitated conditions they can be combined with cooling blood tonics like shatavari, amalaki, sarsaparilla and marshmallow.

Hemostatics should be applied where there is bleeding, like manjishta, plantain or mullein. Arjuna, salvia and turmeric are particularly good for damaged tissue and promoting healing.

The diet should be light and cooling with green drinks (celery, cilantro, alfalfa, sunflower) or with fruit juices (not sour). In debilitated conditions, particularly where there is bleeding, milk can be used and blood tonics.

Exposure to the sun, heat, fire etc. should be avoided, as well as anger and conflict. Pitta emotions aggravate the blood.

FOR KAPHA IN THE BLOOD (Raktagata Kapha)
(Kapha type anemia, pussy type boils etc.):

Circulatory stimulants and expectorants like garlic, cayenne, cinnamon, guggul, myrrh, dry ginger, shilajit, prickly ash are indicated to improve circulation and clear congestion. Aconite or makaradhwaj are useful in extreme conditions. Bitters can be helpful to clear dampness and pus like golden seal, barberry, katuka.

All heavy, greasy, oily, sticky food should be avoided, particularly sugar. Fasting is usually good.

3. MUSCLE/ MAMSA----

FOR CLEANSING THE MUSCLE (ie. infections, tumors):

Many alteratives, analgesics and antirheumatics are useful here like turmeric, guggul, myrrh, cyperus, sarsaparilla, manjishta, gotu kola, aloe gel.

FOR INCREASING MUSCLE:

Tonics are good, especially those which increase muscle, like ginseng, astragalus, ashwagandha, bala, amalaki, licorice, sesame.

The best food is wheat, particularly prepared with ghee, like chapatis. Other good foods are barley, corn, potatoes and nuts. Many beans are helpful like mung, tofu, lentils. A nourishing diet is generally good. Meat can be used in extreme conditions but again will tend to produce an inferior or toxic type of muscle tissue.

Regular exercise is important. Red coral can be useful as a gem (set in silver).

FOR MUSCLE SPASMS:

Antispasmodics are indicated like valerian, jatamansi, skullcap, gotu kola, licorice, white peony, hops. They should be taken internally and also applied to the site as a wash, poultice or in an oil base.

Oil massage or mineral salt baths are good. Relaxation is necessary. Heat applications can be good.

FOR VATA IN THE MUSCLE (Mamsagata Vata)

(wasting away of muscle tissue, loss of flexibility):

Use muscle building herbs and foods; ginseng, ashwagandha, amalaki, bala, etc. Tonification diet is indicated with the use of whole grains, seeds and nuts, oils, dairy products and mild spices.

Relaxing exercises and yoga asanas are helpful, along with gentle massage and external application of oils. Swimming is often good.

FOR PITTA IN THE MUSCLE (Mamsagata Pitta)

(infection or inflammation of muscle tissue):

Alteratives are good; turmeric, manjishta, saffron, safflower, pseudoginseng, salvia, sarsaparilla, gotu kola, red clover, much like the therapy for the blood.

Exercise should be cooling and gentle. Cool water or application of cold packs can be good. Cooling herbs and oils can be applied externally like shatavari, gotu kola, sandalwood or coconut oil.

Application of a dark blue light or color, or gems like blue sapphire, lapis lazuli or turquoise are good.

FOR KAPHA IN THE MUSCLE (Mamsagata Kapha)

(flabbiness, looseness, excess muscle tissue or tumors):

Spices are indicated like cinnamon, saffron, turmeric, black pepper, cayenne. Weight-reducing herbs like myrrh, guggul, dandelion, gentian, barberry are good. An anti-Kapha diet should be followed with no animal products, dairy or wheat.

Exercise should be strong and aerobic, unless again the kidneys are weak.

4. FAT/ MEDAS----

FOR DECREASING FAT:

Pure bitters should be used like katuka, barberry, gentian, golden seal, dandelion, along with hot spices like cayenne, black pepper, dry ginger, calamus. Trikatu plus triphala is good.

Resins like guggul and myrrh are specific. Old honey is useful. All these are fat-reducing (lekhana) in Ayurveda.

Fasting or light, generally anti-Kapha diet is indicated. Strong sweating therapy can be useful and dry saunas.

FOR INCREASING FAT:

Tonics are employed like shatavari, white musali, rehmannia, saw palmetto, licorice, ashwagandha. Dietarily fat, butter, ghee, sesame oil, almond oil and sugars are good. Animal fat and bone marrow may be used in extreme conditions.

Rest and relaxation are required and more contentment in the mind. Yellow sapphire, yellow topaz or citrine can be useful gemstones.

FOR VATA IN THE FAT TISSUE (Medogata Vata)
(wasting away of fat tissue):

Use tonics and fat-increasing herbs like ashwagandha, shatavari etc., foods like ghee, sesame oil, animal fats. Sweating therapy should not be employed. Anxiety and hyperactivity should be reduced.

FOR PITTA IN THE FAT TISSUE (Medogata Pitta)
(inflammation or infection of adipose tissue):

Bitters like katuka, barberry, turmeric, gentian, dandelion, aloe are good. Laxatives like rhubarb and senna are helpful, along with general anti-Pitta approach.

FOR KAPHA IN THE FAT TISSUE (Medogata Kapha)
(obesity, fatty tumors):

Use herbs for reducing fat; guggul, myrrh, dry ginger, black pepper, gentian as above, along with laxatives. Apply sweating therapy as strong as the patient's condition allows.

Attachment, sentimentality and greed should be given up. The level of physical activity should be increased along with study or meditation. The use of a dark blue lamp or gemstones like blue sapphire or lapis lazuli can be helpful.

5. BONE/ ASTHI----

FOR IMPROVING FLEXIBILITY OF BONES:

Use resins like guggul, myrrh, frankincense; herbs like siberian ginseng (eleuthro), pueraria, ashwagandha. The diet should generally be more oily and nutritive along with circulation promoting spices like cinnamon, turmeric and ginger.
Oil massages are helpful.

FOR STRENGTHENING BONES AND IMPROVING HEALING OF BONES:

Use tonics like ashwagandha, comfrey root, solomon's seal, triphala, licorice, sesame, coral ash, particularly in milk decoctions. Good foods are dairy products, sesame, wheat, potatoes. Mineral supplements like calcium and zinc can be good.

Gems like diamond or clear quartz crystal can be good.

FOR EXCESS BONE TISSUE:

Use gugguls, myrrh, gentian, much like the anti-fat therapy. Distilled water or water with low mineral content may be helpful.

ANALGESICS FOR BONE AND JOINT PAIN:

Specific are guggul, myrrh, frankincense, ligusticum, angelica, wintergreen, mint (menthol), camphor, kava kava, cyperus, galangal, ashwagandha, pueraria, gotu kola. They can be taken as medicated oils, essential oils, infusions, baths or plasters.

FOR VATA IN THE BONE (Asthigata Vata)
(Vata, cold-dry type arthritis):

Tonics like ashwagandha, pueraria, dang gui and siberian ginseng are specifically indicated along with herbs for increasing flexibility. Triphala is generally indicated and oil massage with medicated sesame oils. Warming antirheumatics like dry ginger, cinnamon or galangal can be helpful. Heat applications are good.

FOR PITTA IN THE BONE (Asthigata Pitta)
(Pitta, damp-heat type arthritis):

Use cooling and bitter anti-rheumatic herbs like chaparral, turmeric, oregon grape, yucca, white poplar, willow, gotu kola. Massage with cooling oils like coconut or sunflower, and apply cool fomentations or ice packs.

FOR KAPHA IN THE BONE (Asthigata Kapha)
(Kapha, cold-damp type arthritis):

Use hot anti-rheumatic herbs like angelica, dry ginger, cayenne, prickly ash, ajwan, galangal. Apply dry massage with calamus powder, pungent herbs in rubbing alcohol as under plasma. Wearing of ruby can be helpful. Anti-Kapha diet should avoid minerals and high mineral containing water.

6. MARROW AND NERVE TISSUE/ MAJJA----

FOR CLEANSING THE NERVES AND OPENING THE CHANNELS:

Use calamus, basil, cardamom, turmeric, camphor, mint, wintergreen, wild ginger/ strong aromatics. These can be used as infusions, aromas, incense or steam inhalation.

Mantras are useful, particularly Om, Hum, Swaha. Use of gold or gold water is good.

FOR INCREASING NERVE TISSUE:

Use tonics like ashwagandha, shatavari, licorice, lotus seeds, most nuts (particularly almonds and walnuts), sesame seeds. Dairy is usually good, particularly milk. Bone marrow soup can be used in extreme conditions.

Any strong activity to the nerves should be avoided, as well as exposure to the mass media or too much influence of technology. The intake of positive impressions should be emphasized. Noise, sharp colors, stressful environments and conflict should be avoided.

Gems like emerald, peridot, jade, green tourmaline, yellow sapphire, yellow topaz and citrine can be helpful. Application of a green light or meditation on green is good.

NERVINE STIMULANTS:

Strong spices are indicated like calamus, basil, camphor, sage, mint, bayberry, wild ginger. Stronger alkaloid containing herbs like tea, coffee, ephedra, damiana, yohimbe can be used. These, however, have the side effect of creating dependency or over stimulating the system, followed by loss of tone. Most of the cleansing herbs to the nerves are good here.

Stimulating mantras like Aim, Hum or Swaha can be helpful.

NERVINE SEDATIVES:

Use valerian, jatamansi, gotu kola, skullcap, passion flower, sandalwood, zizyphus seeds, lady's slipper, camomile.

Calming mantras like Sham, Ram or Shrim are good. Relaxation and sleep should be increased. Physical activity, particularly in the evening, should be reduced. Use of silver and pearl can be good.

NERVINE TONICS:

Such are ashwagandha, shatavari, lily, zizyphus, licorice, sesame with dairy and nuts in the diet, much like the increasing therapy. Calming mantras can be helpful, like Om, Ram, Sham, Shrim.

FOR VATA IN THE NERVES (Majjagata Vata)
(insomnia, tremors, paralysis etc.):

Follow mainly increasing therapy and take nervine tonics along with sedatives; calamus, ashwagandha, guggul, jatamansi, valerian, basil, zizyphus, camomile.

Mantras and music are helpful and gentle touch or massage. External application of medicated oils is good, particularly to the head and back. Incense like sandalwood or lotus is good. Silent meditation is good and the giving up of fear and anxiety.

FOR PITTA IN THE NERVES (Majjagata Pitta)
(neuralgia, neuritis etc.):

Use cooling nervines like gotu kola, bhringaraj, skullcap, passion flower, hops, betony, zizyphus, shatavari, particularly as medicated oils. Apply Brahmi oil to the head or take Brahmi ghee in the nose. Use cooling fragrances like sandalwood, rose, gardenia, jasmine, lotus. Apply cooling mantras like Om, Sham, Shum, Shrim.

There should be avoidance of sharp or harsh colors. Use white, green and blue in mild shades. Avoid anger, conflict and learn to surrender the will to a higher power.

FOR KAPHA IN THE NERVES (Majjagata Kapha)
(blockage, dullness, epilepsy):

Use cleansing nervines like calamus, basil, turmeric, ginger, mustard, camphor, eucalyptus, wintergreen, sage, cedar.
Snuff of calamus or ginger powder can be good. Use stimulating fragrances based on these, including myrrh and frankincense. Avoid sweet tastes and fragrances. Take strong spices in food. Sleep should be reduced.

7. REPRODUCTIVE TISSUE/ SHUKRA----

FOR INCREASING REPRODUCTIVE TISSUE:

Use tonics like ashwagandha, shatavari, kapikacchu, black musali, white musali, dioscorea, fo ti, rehmannia, saw palmetto. Take nourishing foods like milk, dairy products generally ghee, onions, almonds, sesame, eggs.

Use gems like pearl, moonstone, diamond, clear zircon or quartz crystal.

FOR DECREASING REPRODUCTIVE SECRETIONS:

Use drying herbs like black pepper, gentian, sage, hops; spices and bitters. Avoid sugar, dairy, nuts, eggs and meat (anti-Kapha diet).

FOR STIMULATING THE REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEM:

Use aphrodisiacs like garlic, onions, pippali, cloves, saffron, damiana, yohimbe, musk. Follow anti-Vata diet generally.

FOR SEDATING THE REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEM (ANAPHRODISIACS):

These are mainly nervine sedatives and include gotu kola, calamus, sage, skullcap, gentian, nutmeg, passion flower, hops.

FOR VATA IN THE REPRODUCTIVE TISSUE (Shukragata Vata)
(impotence, infertility, lack of vitality):

Take tonic herbs and foods as under increasing therapy; ashwagandha, kapikacchu, bala, white and black musali etc.

Practice celibacy or moderation in sexual practices (avoid masturbation, promiscuity or homosexual activity). Mantras like Om, Shum or Shrim can be helpful. Wearing of diamond can be good.

FOR PITTA IN THE REPRODUCTIVE TISSUE (Shukragata Pitta)
(reproductive system infections):

Use alteratives, diuretics and tonics like sarsaparilla, gentian, uva ursi, plantain, shatavari, manjishta, marshmallow, aloe gel. Flower fragrances again are good; rose, jasmine, gardenia, saffron, lotus. Practice celibacy or moderation in sex.

Devotional practices can be good, like the worship of Krishna or the Goddess.

FOR KAPHA IN THE REPRODUCTIVE TISSUE (Shukragata Kapha)
(tumors or swellings):

Take tonics like garlic and shilajit, stimulants and secretion reducing herbs like black pepper, gentian, cloves, long pepper. Diuretics are helpful like uva ursi, pipsissewa, parsley. There should be avoidance of dairy, oils, cheese, sugar and taking of diuretic foods. Physical activity should be increased. Sexual activity can be increased if one wishes, but not if there is debility already.

8. OJAS

Immune system tonics are indicated like ashwagandha, shatavari, guduchi, astragalus, ginseng, american ginseng, lycium berries. Good foods are raw milk, yogurt, ghee, honey, almonds, sesame.

Basically the therapy for increasing the reproductive tissue is used, with reduced sexual activity. Gems like diamond and yellow sapphire or yellow topaz are best. Diamond ash (hira bhasma) is useful in extreme conditions.

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CHANNEL SYSTEMS (SROTAS)

Herbs can work to adjust the flow of energy through the channels. They can also work to tonify the particular system by strengthening the main organ behind it. Other treatment methods can be helpful in a similar way.

RESPIRATORY SYSTEM----

TO INCREASE FLOW THROUGH SYSTEM:

Use diaphoretics and anti-cough herbs like ginger, mint, sage, basil, cinnamon, cloves specifically bronchodilators like thyme, ephedra. Apply stronger Pranayama practices like bhastrika (breath of fire). More exercise is useful.

TO DECREASE FLOW (rapid breathing, hyperventilation):

Take astringents like oak bark, schizandra, lotus root, ashwagandha, red raspberry. Practice deep breathing along with holding of the breath as long as is comfortable. Usually this is a high Vata condition.

FOR BLOCKAGES OF FLOW (asthma, severe congestion):

Use decongestants like calamus, eucalyptus, mint, thyme, wintergreen. These can be taken as teas, inhaled as vapors or fragrances or applied as oils or pastes. They can be taken through the nose as powders and snuffs. Again for stronger affect use bronchodilators like ephedra, tobacco, datura and stronger Pranayama like bhastrika. Cleanse the nostrils with a neti pot. In extreme cases emetic therapy (vamana) may be applied.

TO TONIFY SYSTEM:

Use lung tonics like ginseng, american ginseng, astragalus, shatavari, solomon's seal, elecampane. Nuts and dairy products are particularly good but along with mild spices like cinnamon, ginger or cardamom. Practice long term mild, gentle and natural forms of Pranayama. Generally anti-Vata approach should be followed.

FOR VATA IN RESPIRATORY SYSTEM

(dry cough, wasting away of lung tissue):

Use tonics, demulcents and diaphoretics like ginger, cinnamon, licorice, ashwagandha, astragalus. Take foods like almonds, sesame, walnuts, dairy products, along with spices like ginger, cinnamon, cardamom, cloves. Practice tonifying Pranayama. Oil massage is helpful. Take calamus ghee in the nose.

FOR PITTA IN RESPIRATORY SYSTEM

(lung infections):

Use alteratives and tonics like burdock, dandelion, yarrow, echinacea, mullein, shatavari, licorice. Practice cooling Pranayama like shitali. Follow anti-Pitta diet but with abundance of fluids and avoiding heavy foods. Take gotu kola (Brahmi) ghee in the nose.

FOR KAPHA IN RESPIRATORY SYSTEM

(fluid accumulation in lungs and body):

Take stimulants like ginger, cloves, cinnamon, bayberry, ephedra, thyme, long pepper, elecampane and practice stronger Pranayama. Inhalation, infusion or external application of camphor, wintergreen, menthol or eucalyptus is good. Mustard oil can be used for massage or dry massages of calamus powder. Anti-Kapha diet should tend towards light eating or fasting.

DIGESTIVE SYSTEM----

TO STIMULATE FLOW THROUGH SYSTEM (low agni):

All spices are good, like ginger, cinnamon, cardamom, cayenne, black pepper, mustard, horseradish, cloves, garlic, asafoetida. The diet should be light and warm, with fasting if the patient has strength.

TO DECREASE THE FLOW (high agni and samana vayu):

Use bitters like gentian, barberry, katuka (particularly take bitters after meals). Use astringents like tea, red raspberry, alum root, lotus seeds. The diet should be cold, raw and heavy, with increased fluid intake.

TO TONIFY SYSTEM (malabsorption):

Use tonics like ginseng, astragalus, lotus seeds, ashwagandha, bala, white atractylodes or spices like cinnamon, nutmeg, cardamom and ginger in milk decoctions. Take a rich, nourishing diet with proper use of spices but avoid the use of sugar.

FOR VATA IN THE DIGESTIVE SYSTEM (gas and bloating):

Use carminatives like orange peel, cardamom, ginger, basil, mint, nutmeg, asafoetida, hingashtak formula (asafoetida 8). Avoid complex food combinations. Strictly follow anti-Vata dietary regime.

FOR PITTA IN THE DIGESTIVE SYSTEM (hyperacidity):

Use bitters like gentian, barberry, turmeric, golden seal, katuka and milder spices like coriander, cumin, fennel, mint. Antacid demulcents like licorice, marshmallow, shatavari can be helpful, as well as oyster shell or shankha bhasma. Strictly follow anti-Pitta dietary regime avoiding salt and all sour articles.

FOR KAPHA IN THE DIGESTIVE SYSTEM (nausea, vomiting of mucus):

Take hot spices like ginger, cayenne, black pepper, cloves, mustard; The Trikatu formula. Expectorants and antinausea herbs like cardamom, nutmeg and fennel can be helpful. Strictly follow anti-Kapha diet with possible fasting.

WATER METABOLISM SYSTEM----

TO INCREASE FLOW (ie. thirst, lack of salivation, dryness in stomach):

Use fluid promoting tonics like shatavari, marshmallow, licorice, comfrey root, slippery elm, solomon's seal. Have greater intake of water, sour juices, salt, seaweeds, sugar, much like under plasma increasing therapy. Rice gruel or oatmeal can be helpful, as well as dairy products generally. Follow mainly anti-Vata diet.

TO DECREASE FLOW (ie. white greasy tongue coating, nausea, vomiting, fatigue, high Kapha):

Use bitters and spices; gentian, turmeric, black pepper, dry ginger, orange peel, cardamom, turmeric. Avoid water, sweets and reduce fluid intake generally. Use astringents like lotus seeds or red raspberry. Particularly avoid taking sweet and salty foods together. Follow anti-Kapha diet avoiding dairy products and damp and oily foods. Beans, barley, diuretic grains and vegetables can be helpful. Avoid drinking with meals.

TO TONIFY SYSTEM (weak pancreas function):

Take spleen-pancreas tonics and herbs to promote body fluids like ginseng, american ginseng, shatavari, solomon's seal, astragalus, lotus seeds. Avoid pure sugars but take complex carbohydrates and starches.

FOR VATA IN THE WATER SYSTEM

(dehydration, Vata type diabetes):

Follow regime to increase flow and tonify system, and also therapy for Vata in plasma. Use demulcents like licorice, marshmallow, shatavari, Chinese dioscorea, lycium berries.

FOR PITTA IN THE WATER SYSTEM

(thirst, Pitta type diabetes):

Use cooling tonics like amalaki, licorice, shatavari, plus bitters like aloe gel, turmeric, gentian and barberry. Coriander or cilantro can be helpful. Milk and ghee are particularly good.

FOR KAPHA IN THE WATER SYSTEM

(edema, Kapha type diabetes):

Follow regime to decrease flow; cardamom, calamus, ginger, turmeric, gentian, orange peel, bay leaves. Herbs like shilajit, gurmar, guggul, myrrh and garlic can be helpful. Also consider plasma and fat-reducing therapies.

ELIMINATION SYSTEM----

TO INCREASE FLOW (ie. constipation):
Use strong laxatives (purgatives) like rhubarb, aloe, senna, castor oil. Take with intestinal correctives like ginger, fennel, coriander, cardamom, orange peel.

TO DECREASE FLOW (ie. diarrhea):
Use astringents (anti-diarrhea herbs) like oak bark, alum root, mullein, red raspberry, bayberry, lotus root or simply a strong black tea. If the condition is infectious consider Pitta reducing bitters like golden seal, katuka, barberry, gentian. If it is chronic consider tonics like ashwagandha, ginseng or elecampane.

TO TONIFY SYSTEM:
Use colon tonics like haritaki, Triphala, psyllium, flaxseed. Follow an anti-Vata diet with more bulk and oily foods.

FOR VATA IN THE ELIMINATION SYSTEM (gas and constipation):
Use mild and lubricating laxatives like Triphala or psyllium. Take purgatives like castor oil when necessary. Use carminatives like asafoetida, basil, calamus, valerian.

Take heavy and oily diet with bulk containing food and adequate spices. Sesame oil massage can be helpful.

FOR PITTA IN THE ELIMINATION SYSTEM:
For constipation use bitters and astringents like rhubarb, senna, aloe (no aloe where bleeding exists); bulk laxatives like psyllium; mild laxatives like rose and generally cooling diet avoiding spices and alcohol.

For diarrhea follow the decreasing flow therapy, avoiding hot, greasy and sweet food.

FOR KAPHA IN THE ELIMINATION SYSTEM (mucus in stool):
Take hot spices like trikatu, cayenne, black pepper, calamus, basil, along with bitter laxatives like rhubarb and aloe, or Triphala if the patient is weak or elderly.

Follow a light diet, avoidance of oils, sugars and sticky food. Fasting may be good. There should be increased physical activity and avoidance of sleep during the day.

URINARY SYSTEM (MUTRAVAHA SROTAS)----

TO INCREASE FLOW (promote urination):
Use diuretics like gokshura, punarnava, uva ursi, pipsissewa, cleavers, wild carrot, burdock seed. Take diuretic foods like

parsley, cilantro, celery, carrots, barley, corn, watercress, asparagus, mushrooms, aduki beans. Drink regular tea or astringent herbs like alfalfa. At the same time adequate water should be taken.

TO DECREASE FLOW (stop excess urination):
Take urinary astringents like rose hips, lotus seeds, ashwagandha, schizandra. Use water retaining foods (plasma increasing diet) and salt or sea weeds. Often excess urination is caused by cold and can be alleviated by hot spices like cinnamon, ginger, cubebs or cayenne.

FOR BLOCKAGE IN FLOW (stones):
Take lithotriptics (stone removing herbs) like corn silk, pashana bheda, gravel root, uva ursi, white oak bark, turmeric. If there is irritation or bleeding take a demulcent also like marshmallow or licorice. Usually large amounts of water should be drunk.

TO TONIFY SYSTEM (weak kidney function):
Take kidney tonics like gokshura, shilajit, hoelen, ashwagandha, sarsaparilla, marshmallow, rehmannia, shatavari, white musali, black musali. Avoid stress, travel, anxiety, overwork and overexercise. Generally follow anti-Vata therapy.

FOR VATA IN THE URINATION SYSTEM:
Use mainly tonification therapy, for example gokshura and ashwagandha. Avoid travel and agitated exercise. Apply sesame oil to lower back or heat therapy to lower abdomen. Avoid harsher diuretics like uva ursi or gravel root. Increase fluid intake with plasma-increasing juices.

FOR PITTA IN THE URINATION SYSTEM (urinary tract infections):
Apply cooling diuretics like cilantro, coriander, lemon grass, sandalwood, sarsaparilla, uva ursi, pipsissewa, plantain. Cooling tonics like shatavari, sarsaparilla and rehmannia are good in debilitated conditions.

Take fruits and fruit juices like melon, watermelon, pomegranate, cranberry, along with increased intake of liquids. Yet avoid sour juices.

FOR KAPHA IN THE URINATION SYSTEM (mucus in urine):
Use diuretics and spices like juniper berries, cinnamon, cubebs, shilajit, pippali, guggul, garlic. Avoid all sticky and heavy food. Reduce fluid intake. Take diaphoretic herbs or use sweating therapy (increasing sweating takes the load off the kidneys).

SWEATING SYSTEM----

Also related to plasma and prana systems. It is part of the lung system and the skin. Absence of sweating is a sign of the first stage of disease and the attack by environmental factors, mainly cold.

TO INCREASE FLOW (promote sweating):

Use diaphoretics like ephedra, cinnamon, ginger, cloves, sage, yarrow, mint, vitex, etc. Take a light diet or fasting avoiding oily, greasy, heavy or slow to digest food. Take adequate fluids. It is best to stay in a warm bed or warm environment.

Take saunas, steam baths, go out into heat or sun or do strong exercise. Stronger pranayama can be good.

TO DECREASE FLOW (stop sweating):

Use astringents like sage (taken cold), astragalus, schizandra, ashwagandha, hibiscus, red raspberry, strawberry leaf, oak bark. Avoid heat and physical activity generally.
Avoid diaphoretic teas like cinnamon, ginger or peppermint. Diuretics may be helpful, like corn silk, gokshura, parsley, cilantro. When sweating is owing to nervousness and autonomic nerve system imbalance follow an anti-Vata therapy.

FOR VATA IN THE SWEATING SYSTEM

(Vata type colds and flus):

Use mild diaphoretics like cinnamon, fresh ginger, basil, along with demulcents like licorice, marshmallow and ashwagandha. Use mild sweating therapy along with taking of adequate fluids (plasma building juices).

FOR PITTA IN THE SWEATING SYSTEM

(Pitta cold and flus):

Use cooling diaphoretics like yarrow, elder flowers, mint, honeysuckle, dandelion, echinacea, burdock. Avoid oily and warm foot and take many liquids.

FOR KAPHA IN THE SWEATING SYSTEM

(Kapha colds and flus):

Use strong diaphoretics like angelica, ginger, cloves, ephedra, bayberry, sage, cinnamon, eucalyptus and as strong sweating therapy as the patient can handle. Anti-cough and lung opening herbs can be helpful like coltsfoot, mullein, thyme, vasa.

MENSTRUATION SYSTEM----

Related to reproductive system and blood and can be combined with their therapies.

TO INCREASE FLOW (promote menstruation)

Use emmenagogues like turmeric, saffron, safflower, pennyroyal, motherwort, rose flowers, rosemary, myrrh, dang gui, salvia. Sometimes a simple ginger or cinnamon tea may be sufficient.

TO DECREASE FLOW (stop excess menstruation):

Use astringents like manjishta, mugwort, red raspberry, lodhra, gotu kola, bhringaraj, lotus root. This is usually an aspect of the anti-Pitta therapy.

TO TONIFY SYSTEM:

Use female reproductive tonics like shatavari, amalaki, dong gui, rehmannia, lycium berries, aloe gel or milk decoctions of saffron. Follow mainly the plasma and blood building regimes. Diet should be anti-Vata, with much rich, oily and sweet food along with mild spices like ginger, cardamom, turmeric. Turmeric ghee is good.

TO SOOTHE THE FLOW IN THE SYSTEM (counter dysmenorrhea or PMS):

Use antispasmodics like cyperus, valerian, asafoetida, pennyroyal, gotu kola, camomile, mint, bupleurum. Treatment is similar to the Vata condition.

FOR VATA IN THE MENSTRUAL SYSTEM
(dryness, cramps, painful PMS):

Use both tonics, sedatives and emmenagogues, also triphala. For example, use shatavari and ashwagandha along with warming emmenagogues like and cinnamon, saffron or rosemary. Valerian or asafoetida can be helpful for cramping, or cyperus or cramp bark. Apply medicated sesame oil to lower abdomen.

FOR PITTA IN THE MENSTRUAL SYSTEM
(excess menstruation, yellow leukorrhea):

Use cooling emmenagogues like manjishta, turmeric, rose or red raspberry with cooling tonics like shatavari, rehmannia and aloe gel. Alteratives like sarsaparilla, sandalwood and gotu kola can be good. Fragrances like rose, lotus, jasmine and gardenia are helpful. In acute conditions hemostatics like manjishta, red raspberry, agrimony, yarrow, nettle or shepherd's purse are good. Douche with these astringents may be helpful, along with bitters like golden seal or echinacea.

FOR KAPHA IN THE MENSTRUAL SYSTEM (ie. white leukorrhea):

Use warming emmenagogues like turmeric, saffron, ginger, cinnamon, garlic. Bitters like aloe gel and bayberry can be helpful. Douches with expectorants and astringents like bayberry, oak bark or calamus can be helpful. Follow anti-Kapha diet avoiding dairy and rich, sweet and oily foods.

LACTATION SYSTEM (STANYAVAHA SROTAS)----

This is much like the previous and is an extension of it. It is also related to plasma and the water metabolism system and can be treated similarly.

TO CLEANSE THE BREAST MILK:

Use expectorants like calamus, cardamom, ginger, fennel, cinnamon. Follow anti-Kapha diet avoiding heavy, rich and greasy food. Drink more water.

TO INCREASE FLOW:

Use lactagogues like fennel, dill, caraway, dandelion root, marshmallow, dang gui. Follow anti-Vata diet with much intake of liquids, dairy, fruit juices and oils.

TO DECREASE FLOW:

Use astringents like sage, oak bark, bayberry. Follow reducing and anti-Kapha diet, with less intake of liquids. It is good to eat sprouted grains, wheat, rice and barley, but taken before the sprouts turn green.

TO TONIFY SYSTEM:

Use female reproductive tonics like shatavari, dang gui, licorice and foods like milk, yogurt, ghee, coconut, sesame. Diet should be pro-Kapha with rich and oily foods, balanced with spices like ginger, cinnamon, saffron and turmeric.

FOR VATA IN THE LACTATION SYSTEM (dryness, difficult flow):

Use tonics/ ashwagandha, bala, shatavari, licorice, fennel, dang gui and typical increasing therapy. More oils and rich food should be used in the diet.

FOR PITTA IN THE LACTATION SYSTEM (infection):

Use cleansing herbs like dandelion, violet, golden seal, turmeric, barberry, cyperus, bupleurum. They can also be applied externally in the form of a poultice. A light anti-Pitta diet should be followed with more raw foods and greens.

FOR KAPHA IN THE LACTATION SYSTEM (congestion, tumors):

Follow therapy to reduce flow; turmeric, calamus, cardamom, sage, cyperus, bupleurum. Generally an anti-Kapha regime should be followed, avoiding milk, dairy products, cheese, butter, oils, nuts, meat, sugar and salt in the diet.

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PART III. LESSON 12

1. What are the signs of blockage of the blood (circulatory system)?
2. What are the signs of high Vata in the respiratory system?
3. How is high Pitta in the menstrual system treated?
4. How is high Pitta in the urinary system treated?
5. How is high Vata in the nerve tissue treated?

6. How is high Kapha in the fat tissue treated?
7. What are some herbs for stopping bleeding?
8. What are some herbs for reducing reproductive secretions?
9. What are some herbs for unblocking the channels in the bone tissue?

10. How is high Vata in the muscle tissue treated?
11. How is high Kapha in the plasma treated?
12. How is high Pitta in the excretory system treated?

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PART III. LESSON 13

THE SCIENCE OF PRANA OR THE LIFE-FORCE

This section shows us how to treat the life-force on all of its different levels.

The essence of all healing is to increase Prana, the positive life energy and decrease Apana, the negative life or death energy. Prana brings with it the internalizing and ascending of the energy of consciousness. Apana causes the externalizing and descending energy of ignorance. These are the forces of evolution and involution, spiritual growth and decay in the universe.

All diseases can be treated through the Prana, as whatever changes we make in it communicate themselves to the entire body. Conversely, the condition of Prana should be examined in the treatment of all diseases, as they rest in its dysfunctions. As long as Prana is in the body we live. When it leaves the body we die.

Prana, however, is not just a undirected force. It is the natural and organic intelligence that sustains all the autonomic functions of the body. We can see the intelligence of Prana in our unconscious bodily functions, like the marvelous and complex power of digestion.

When Prana becomes awakened it becomes the power of consciousness which directs the unfoldment of the spiritual evolution. The same intelligence which guides our body and the whole of nature can thereby come to rule our minds. In our normal state our lives occur according to the unconscious functioning of Prana. This is ignorance or the dependent state of the mind, the life of the ego. When Prana becomes conscious in us then we learn to go beyond the ego. Awakened Prana as a force of grace guides us.

All healing, as is commonly known in alternative medicine, is through the power of the life-force. But true healing is through the power of the awakened Prana. This can only be arrived at through yogic practices like asana, pranayama and meditation. While we cannot ourselves do this for our patients we can guide them in this direction. This is the role of the true healer and health counselor.

THE PRANIC SHEATH

The Pranic or vital sheath envelopes the physical or food sheath. It connects to the physical body through the series of channels known as the "Pranavaha srotas", the channels that carry the Prana. These have two origins in the body, the heart and digestive tract, meaning the circulatory and digestive systems. They encompass the entire body through the skin, the senses, the respiratory and nervous systems as well. No place in our body can be without Prana or it will decay.

ABSORPTION OF PRANA

Prana is absorbed short term, via the breath, primarily through the lungs. Long term, via food, it is absorbed through the colon. This is the general scheme.

Actually the lung system is rather complex and Prana is absorbed at several sites along it:

First, it is taken in via the nostrils and the nasal cavity. Here takes place its immediate absorption to the brain and senses.

Second, it is taken in through the lungs. Here it is transferred through the blood and plasma to the body as a whole.

Third, it is absorbed through the skin. This is a longer term or slower respiration which serves to balance the Prana in the body, regulating the processes of breathing and eating, and protecting the body at the surface from coming under pathogenic influences from the exterior.

THE NOSTRILS----

The role of the nasal cavity, the nostrils and sinuses in the absorption of Prana is particularly important and often overlooked. The nasal cavity sits below the brain and from it a subtle portion of the Prana can enter directly into the brain. This subtle portion of Prana stimulates the brain and keeps it active and adaptable.

When the head is congested or when the Prana is not being absorbed properly in the nasal passages the brain becomes dull, thinking becomes confused or muddled, memory is often weakened, the acuity of perception declines and our learning ability suffers. The brain itself becomes stagnant. Meditation becomes very difficult if not impossible to do. Hence for the health of the brain and through it the whole nervous system the right absorption of Prana in the head is important. This depends upon the right functioning of the nostrils and on right breathing through them.

Through the nasal cavity, moreover, the Prana is able to reach all the senses via a similar direct action. Four of the five senses dwell in the head and are connected with the nasal passage. The fifth and general sense, that of touch, is also centered here.

Our receptors which allow for the sense of smell are located on the roof of the nasal cavity. The ears connect to the nasal cavity via the eustachian tubes. Our sense of taste is rooted in the tongue but also is communicated via the palate, both below the nasal cavity. The eyes are immediately above the nasal cavity and the sinuses behind the eyes, which are closely involved with the process of seeing, are in the nasal cavity as well. The skin, the organ of touch, is part of the lung system which is rooted in the action of the nasal passages.

Difficulties with the nostrils and sinuses have a detrimental affect upon all the senses. When the nose is clogged, when the mucus membranes are too wet or too dry, we lose our sense of smell. When this impairment extends to the auditory canal our sense of hearing and our sense of equilibrium in the body are also affected. We may have loss of hearing, earache or an uncomfortable sense of pressure in the head. When the sinuses behind the eyes are affected our sight is deranged. We may develop sensitivity to light, headaches, tearing, or red, itchy, inflamed or swollen eyes. Congestion of the nasal passages in addition can cause lack of taste and through it lack of appetite. It also can cause a blockage of peripheral circulation generally wherein we have an absence of sweating, body ache and possible skin rashes. All of us have experienced how a head cold can move to the body as a whole. This shows how the blockage of the nostrils can affect the skin.

The head, via the tongue as its main agent, is the most important of the organs of action. When the head is congested, speech is impaired and all bodily movements suffer. Maintaining mobility of the head is thus essential for maintaining mobility of the rest of the organs of action and the joints. When the nostrils are clogged or the head congested, Udana Vayu (the upward moving air) is blocked along with our expression, aspiration and enthusiasm.

The common cold is the first stage of all diseases. It shows a breakdown in our immune system and defense mechanism. It comes mainly through an impairment of Prana, from a weakening of the connection of the Pranic sheath with the physical sheath. We first note it with congestion in the head because this is the first point at which Prana is absorbed, the most key connection point between the Pranic and physical sheaths. Hence maintaining the health and right functioning of the nostrils is important for maintaining our immune system, preventing disease and keeping our physical body under the vitalizing influence of the Pranic envelope.

Not only does the Prana absorbed in the nasal passages serve to clear and energize the brain and senses, in the process the Prana is purified so that the lungs can absorb the air better and better extract the life-energy from it. The external air, which is

foreign to the body, is rendered harmonious to the body in the nasal passages, just as food is broken down by chewing in the mouth. When the nose is blocked and we breathe through our mouths this process does not occur. Hence allergic reactions become more common. The lungs have to work harder and cannot be as successful in doing their work. When the nostrils are not functioning correctly we suffer from colds, flus, hay fever, sinusitis, headaches and from these more severe respiratory or nervous system disorders may develop.

When Prana is impaired the rest of the five Vayus get deranged. Apana Vayu, the negative or downward moving of the breaths, accumulates in the head and brings on the processes of decay into the brain. Any stagnant or congested space in the nose or sinuses allows the growth of pathogens, which further weaken the system. The Prana absorbed in the head is the primary and guiding form of all the five pranas and through it all the vital processes of the body are directed.

TREATING THE PRANA

The key to the energy of Prana and the health of the body, therefore, lies in the nostrils. Through it we maintain our connection with the Pranic sheath that rules over the physical. Hence the importance of Pranayama, nasya and the use of water daily to clear the sinuses.

THE NOSTRILS

About half a cup of water, with 1/4 tsp. of salt in it, is poured via a small pot in one nostril and out the other. This is accomplished by tilting the head until the flow is established. We can also add other herbs or oils to the water also. We can use calamus tea to cleanse them, gotu kola to cool the mind, golden seal for antiseptic action on the sinuses. Herbs can be applied through the nose much as taken internally and will have the same basic affects but acting more directly on the lungs, brain and Prana.

In Yoga a special pot is made for this purpose, called a neti pot. It is an important tool to have in one's life and should be used morning and evening, even more often if there are sinus difficulties. Regular use of it will cure most sinus problems. It is preferable to use natural water (spring or well) over tap water. Iodized salt, also should not be used.

We can also do nasya (Ayurvedic nasal therapy) to clear the sinuses. We can snuff the power of spicy herbs like calamus, bayberry or dry ginger to clear the nostrils. This is particularly good for Kapha. For Pitta it can cause bleeding, so we should be

careful with it if there is any tendency to nosebleed (epistaxis). Vata also suffers from dryness in the nostrils which dry powders can aggravate. We can apply sesame oil or ghee, including their medicated forms for action on the nasal passages and brain. We can use any eyedropper for small applications or for larger applications pour small amounts of oil into the nose. Again care should be taken, too much oil may drip into the throat and cause some nausea. Usually only a teaspoon will be enough. On the most basic level we can use our little finger to place the oil in the nose and do a small circular massage of the nostril with it. The massaging action is also helpful. The touch of our own hand to the body can aid in balancing its energy flow.

Nasya is also discriminated as tonifying or reducing. Generally we do a cleansing nasya treatment by applying water or cleansing herbs (spices or bitters) before applying larger amounts of oil. Salt water has both cleansing and tonifying (it softens and improves the mucous membranes) effects.

The processes of "shirodhara", oil application to the forehead, and other applications of oil and massage to the head are important here as well. In shirodhara a stream of oil, drop by drop, usually medicated sesame, is directed to the forehead, particularly the site of the third eye. Another method is "shirobasti". There are leather caps made in India. They are placed on the head and filled with oil, again usually sesame or its medicated forms. The time of the treatment should be at least one half hour. A more simple way is simply to do a very heavy oil massage to the head.

THE EARS, EYES AND MOUTH

In the same way it is important to clean and massage the ears, the mouth and the teeth. Cleansing the ears can be accomplished with the little finger or a Q-tip and oil like ghee, sesame can be applied to lubricate them. Calamus oil or ghee is best for clearing the channels and improving sensory acuity. Gotu kola (Brahmi) oil or ghee aids in preventing infection and is soothing. The process of application should be gentle so as not to hurt the ear. Again massage with the little finger is helpful, as is a massage of the ear lobe and surrounding region.

Cleansing the eyes through occasional tearing is similarly useful. Simple onion juice can be used for this purpose. A little onion juice can be placed in the eye with one's finger or an eye dropper. Though it will burn at first and feel painful, the tearing it causes will have a cleansing and clearing affect. Often there will also be the discharge of mucus from the sinuses or other expectoration.

When the eyes are inflamed such eye clearing herbs as aloe gel, chrysanthemum, camomile, eyebright or golden seal can be used.

They can be applied not only as eye washes but also as poultices. Application of ghee to the eyes is useful, particularly Triphala ghee. This can be done regularly to the eye lids and corners of the eyes and will help improve vision.

Cleansing the tongue with a tongue scraper (preferably of copper as this is antiseptic) is also good and has a natural scraping action on the tissues (lekhana). This should be done morning and night. It stimulates the entire gastrointestinal tract and helps regulate the Pranas. We should also take mixtures of spicy herbs like cardamom and fennel to freshen the mouth. Ayurvedic toothpastes and toothpowders are also important here. Regular massage of the gums with the toothpowders will prevent most gum disease. We can also massage the gums with coconut or other oils.

The importance of aroma therapy and the use of essential oils, incense and fragrant herbs resides largely in their immediate effect upon the Prana in the head. Aromas work directly on the Prana and can aid in the function of the nostrils and through them the senses and brain. Many spicy fragrances like mint, camphor, wintergreen or eucalyptus are particularly good for opening the sinuses. Flower fragrances like rose and lotus calm the emotions and enhance creativity. Again go over our section on the use of aromas.

Of these factors Pranayama is the most important. While the other treatments are largely passive, Pranayama is the most active way to treat the Prana. It is the only real way that we can exercise our nostrils. Lack of exercise to the nostrils can be as much or more damaging to our health than lack of exercise with our limbs. Alternate nostril Pranayama, breathing in through the left nostril and out through the right, then in through the right and out through the left, is the main method for exercising the sinuses and developing their strength. It should be done daily and regularly, ten minutes at least morning and evening. When the breath between the nostrils is imbalanced there must be other imbalances in the body system.

We should remember that it always requires water to absorb Prana. Hence if our nasal passages are too dry, we cannot absorb Prana properly. Regular application of oil to the ears, eyes, mouth, nose and skin is thus important. The oil on our membranes and orifices also protects them. It will aid in our resistance to cold, wind, dryness, heat and other pathogenic exogenous factors.

This connection of the Prana to the body that sustains our immune system is what the Chinese call "defensive chi". If our nostrils are not functioning correctly the health foundation of the entire body is impaired. Merely taking good food or herbs may not be sufficient if we are not dealing with the Prana directly.

When the nostrils are not functioning properly, the lungs cannot work properly, the skin also is impaired in its activity. Moreover, the colon cannot function properly and the digestive system is impaired--not to mention the brain and senses already mentioned. It may not be of use to treat these other systems of the body when the root problem in the nasal passage is not treated.

Psychologically, the sinuses are blocked primarily by fear. It is usually fear that causes us not to breathe. It holds us in suspense. Biologically it comes from the animal instinct to play dead. Psychologically, it also occurs when we are afraid to live or to face life, afraid to express ourselves, when do not want to make ourselves obvious. Those who suppress themselves, lack in self-confidence in life are more likely to suffer from this problem. It usually arises from lack of love and the lack of emotional and spiritual nourishment that goes with it. It is often an internalization of our emotional rejection by others. We may feel that no one loves and hence no one wants us to live.

PATTERNS OF ACCUMULATION

Vata accumulates in the nasal passages as blocked air. It is usually trapped dryness or is related to tissue deficiency in the region. Pitta accumulates as trapped heat or as yellow mucus, with possible inflammation or infection. Kapha accumulates as thick or sticky mucus; trapped dampness or overly developed tissue and excess secretions.

Signs of high Vata in the head include sensitivity to sound, ungroundedness, anxiety, vertigo, dizziness, loss of equilibrium, with possible throbbing headaches and insomnia. Signs of high Pitta in the head are sensitivity to light, redness of the face and eyes, bleeding from the nose, inflammatory diseases of the eyes, anger, irritability, burning headaches. Signs of high Kapha in the head are facial edema, lack of sense of taste, swollen glands, excess or mucoid saliva, with possible dull headaches, heaviness and lethargy.

Lack of care or emotional nourishment, particularly as a child, causes congestion in the head and poor function of the sinuses. Being suppressed in life or not being able to do what we really want also blocks the breathing process in this first stage. The usually dietary and environmental factors for aggravating the Doshas must be considered as well.

THE LUNGS----

The lungs are the main site for the absorption of the breath. The breath taken in through the lungs invigorates our whole

circulation, energizes the blood and gives us strength. It sustains the flow of energy through all the channels. Prana is taken in and becomes Vyana, the diffusive or circulatory energy, as it is absorbed into the blood. This allows us to act and function on a motor level.

All three portions of the lungs, upper, middle and lower are important for extracting the Prana. Should one fail to function our vitality becomes impaired. Stagnant air in the lower lungs, breath that is not expelled properly, becomes a breeding ground for toxins and for a negative life-force (again, Apana Vayu). In any damp and enclosed area fungi and bacteria can grow. If our breath is too shallow toxic air accumulates in the lungs.

Generally, Vata accumulates in the upper portion of the lungs, Pitta in the middle and Kapha at the bottom. High Vata manifests as stagnant air in the lungs, dry cough, rapid or shallow breathing. High Pitta manifests as stagnant heat in the lungs, yellow phlegm, bleeding in the lungs. High Kapha manifests as fluid accumulation in the lungs, clear, white or watery phlegm.

Hence it is important that we empty out our entire lungs. We do not have to do this with every breath but we should do it daily, at least morning and evening. This is the importance of exhalation. It is more important to learn to exhale completely than to inhale completely. If we learn to exhale fully, a full inhalation will naturally occur. If we emphasize inhalation we may my fail to exhale completely and so stagnant air will remain in the lungs. We may even forget to breathe.

We hold grief, sorrow and attachment (usually Kapha emotions) in the lungs. This unwillingness to let go blocks our breathing process. This clinging to life is a clinging to the past which is really a clinging to death and impairs our own vitality. When we don't feel loved we fail to breathe. Vata people particularly may try to protect themselves by holding the shoulders in, as if with their arms over their chest. This is also usually an expression of fear.

THE SKIN----

The role of the skin in respiration is well known. If the skin is covered, as with certain paints, we may even die. While respiration through the skin is not as immediate as through the nostrils or as evident as through the lungs, it is still quite significant.

Yet it cannot function if the skin is dirty or the pores clogged. Hence daily baths or showers are important, or occasional scraping of the skin. Nor can it function if the skin is too dry; hence the importance of oil massage and the Ayurvedic science of Snehana, Oleation therapy.

Sweats or saunas are useful for clearing the skin, cleansing the plasma and improving peripheral circulation. Svedana, Ayurvedic steam therapy, is also useful in this regard. It maintains this gateway of Prana and protects the surface of our body from diseases. It is particularly useful in the winter to ward off colds and flus. Most of us should do a weekly or monthly sweat in the winter and should take more diaphoretic (sweat promoting) teas, like cinnamon, ginger, mint and sage. However, where there is dryness or high Vata, or too much heat (high Pitta), too much sweating should be avoided.

THE DIGESTIVE SYSTEM----

In the digestive system Prana is absorbed in all the major sites along the gastro-intestinal tract: First in the mouth and palate, second in the stomach, third in the small intestine and fourth and primarily in the large intestine.

THE MOUTH

A certain portion of Prana is absorbed immediately from our food in the mouth, from its taste, just as a certain portion of the breath is immediately taken in through the nostrils. Hence it is important to taste our food properly and to have food that is good in taste, neither tasteless nor overly tasty. A certain portion of the Prana taken from the food in the mouth enters from the palate directly into the brain and senses and also serves to energize them. For this reason the mouth should be cleaned between meals and water sipped during the meal to keep our taste buds clear to absorb the Prana from the food.

Another portion is conveyed again via the palate, the root of the channels of the water metabolism system, and gives our body the signals which help regulate the water content of the body. Another portion is conveyed via the tongue to the digestive fire, wherein it stimulates its function to aid in the digestion of food. It thereby also stimulates Samana Vayu.

THE STOMACH

In the stomach the earth and water elements from the food we have eaten are absorbed along with the Prana inherent in them. Moreover, the Prana absorbed through the mouth and nose serves to energize the function of the stomach and pancreas which do this work. If not enough Prana is taken in at these sites we do not have the energy to digest the earth and water elements in our food and the undigested food mass causes a build up of mucus in the system.

Stomach function can be improved with demulcent herbs (like shatavari, marshmallow, licorice, comfrey root). They aid in the product of the alkaline secretions of the stomach.

THE SMALL INTESTINE

In the small intestine the fire elements are taken in along with their Prana. The energy we take in through spices and their aromatic oils aids in this extraction. Other fire containing condiments like salt, vinegar, wine and other sour substances are helpful at this stage. Again Trikatu is most typical. Hingashtak is also useful (see AYURVEDIC HEALING).

THE LARGE INTESTINE

Finally in the large intestine the air and ether elements are absorbed along with the main portion of Prana in our food. This is absorbed via the membrane in the colon (purishadhara kala) and it is conveyed to the bone tissue (asthi dhatu), wherein it serves to nourish and energize the deeper tissues of bone, marrow and nerve tissue, and the reproductive tissue.

If our food is lacking in Prana or if through indigestion it is not absorbed properly these deeper tissues fail to be nourished properly. If toxic gases are formed in the colon the Prana also will be absorbed and these toxins will enter into and damage these deeper tissues. This is the basis of most diseases, particularly most Vata (bone and nervous system disorders). This Prana absorbed from the colon is the most concentrated form of Prana. It can be held in the deeper tissues as the basis of our energy reserve and endurance capacity. It sustains our longevity.

Hence the importance of the Triphala formula in Ayurvedic medicine. It allows for the right absorption of Prana in the large intestine. It tonifies the colon, improves the functioning of its mucus membrane and helps expel toxic gases.

Other carminative herbs are helpful here, particularly Asafoetida (and Hingashtak formula, Asafoetida 8). Cardamom, basil, cloves, orange peel, fennel, etc. are also good. Hot spices like cayenne and black pepper can burn up toxins in the colon.

SUMMARY

We see that through the respiratory and digestive systems we have many ways and levels of absorbing Prana. The combination of short term and long term methods allows for a constant streaming of Prana through the body.

The two main sites to watch for the absorption of Prana are the nostrils and the colon. The nostrils show us the functioning of the lung system in the absorption of Prana, the colon that of the digestive system. If these are functioning properly health will be good. If they are not health and the immune system will falter.

The nostrils can be used to measure the functioning of the Pranic or vital body; the colon that of the food sheath or physical body. We should examine these carefully in all diseases and guard their function carefully in our daily lives.

PRANA AND WATER

We see that Prana is extracted via the mucus membranes and the skin of the body. The entire gastro-intestinal tract has such a mucus lining, as do the lungs. It is also extracted via the senses. All these tissues have a watery lining. It takes water to absorb Prana. There is a balance between Prana (air) and water in the body, which is the balance between dryness and wetness in the body. If there is not sufficient lubrication of the tissues the Prana is not absorbed. If there is too much lubrication of the tissues, the Prana is not absorbed. The Prana serves to keep the mucus membranes dry enough to function properly. The water in the body keeps them wet enough to function properly.

When the lungs or sinuses are blocked then because Prana is not flowing to dry the mucus membranes, their water increases as phlegm. Hence blockage of Prana always causes a build up of mucus. This does not necessarily mean that Kapha (phlegm in the system) is high but only that Prana is low. In addition, when the Prana does not flow then the water does not circulate either. It stagnates and can be the site wherein various pathogens, bacteria or viruses flourish. And when water is too much (as in many cases of obesity), the Prana is obstructed.

Water is a necessary vehicle for the absorption of Prana. Moreover, some water is absorbed with the Prana. The Prana mixes with the water of the mucus membrane, which is absorbed into the system to conduct the Prana. In the nostrils, some Prana along with water is absorbed into the brain. This occurs by a kind of evaporative process. Also some Prana is absorbed into the nasal passages and mouth generally. In the lungs, Prana and water are absorbed into the lymph and blood. In the large intestine, Prana and water are absorbed. The Prana is conducted into bone tissue, which requires a lot of water to do.

Hence we see that it is not entirely correct to say that ether is the space in which Vata is stored in the body as air. Actually, Vata also exists in water and this allows it to circulate in the body, as Prana itself causes the water to circulate.

This energized or Prana filled water is the basic tissue element of the body (rasa). That is why Prana can be absorbed at any site along the surface of the body (rasa is also skin). In fact, the entire body is energized or Prana filled water, in different densities or degrees of solution.

In the practice of Pranayama, we create more such energized water in the system (rasa). Through Pranayama we experience an increase in saliva in the mouth. This is not ordinary saliva produced in the process of eating. It is usually of a sweet taste. It is a production of new plasma of a higher order, which we should appreciate. In this process we are building up the plasma of the body according to a higher level of Pranic energization. Such new plasma is food for the deeper tissues and helps balance the Vata in the system.

HOW PRANA IS LOST

In maintaining the strength of Prana it is not enough to consider the means of its absorption into the body, we must also consider how it is lost, how we lose it, often unconscious of the vitality we are discarding in the process.

We fail to absorb Prana through the breath, if we are not breathing properly or if our air is stagnant, polluted or impure. We fail to absorb Prana through digestion if our digestion is impaired or if our food is dead, canned, stale, old or recooked. But we can also expel the Prana we possess through various means.

From the lung system, Prana is lost from too much speaking, particularly from agitated or thoughtless talk, from argument or chattering. Strong releases of sound, like crying, shouting and screaming are even more Prana reducing. Speech is through the Udana Vayu or upward moving air. It is through exhalation that we speak but it is not merely a release of the exhaled air. It is also a release of the energy gained through inhalation.

Excessive sweating is another route of the lung system, that of the skin, whereby Prana is lost. When our vitality is weak we should not over sweat our system. Initially sweating serves to energize our system and help dispel toxins. Long term, however, we will sweat out our vital fluids and the Prana they contain. Hence sweating to moisten the skin is good, but profuse sweating can be harmful if our body fluids and plasma is not sufficient (as in many Vata types).

From the digestive system Prana is lost through diarrhea, dysentery or chronic loose stool. It can also be lost through constipation, though the loss is seldom as acute. Any excess movement of Apana Vayu causes it to be lost. Excess urination can also deplete Prana, as it also increases Apana Vayu.

Perhaps the greatest loss of Prana is through sex, which also increases Apana Vayu. In orgasm or ejaculation the Prana stored in our deeper tissues is released. This provides a great sensation of pleasure as our latent Prana is activated and
energizes our body and senses as it is discharged. A strong force of Prana is necessary to provide for conception, for life only comes from life. Another loss is through excess menstruation.

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THE ROLE OF THE MIND

Just as the Pranic sheath envelopes the physical, so does the mental sheath envelop the Pranic and the physical through it. It

connects to the physical body mainly through the brain and senses, through the nerve and reproductive tissues (majja and shukra dhatus). It connects through the nervous system and its seven plexes, which correspond to the seven chakras of the subtle body.

If our emotions are disturbed this will immediately affect the Prana, which in turn will upset the physical body. All negative emotions impair the breath. Depression causes lack of breathing. Hysteria may cause hyperventilation. Excessive thought, like worry and calculation, excess emotion, like grief or anger, can all be very significant ways in which we lose Prana. They can be more significant than dietary, environmental or even structural problems (like weak lung capacity) in this respect.

The body can only function properly when the mind is in a state of peace. When we are agitated by emotions naturally our energy is drawn to deal with them. Emotional reactions, like fear or anger, have a biological basis. They are aroused when our body is threatened. Hence our physical processes shut down to deal with this threat. When emotions are not resolved they keep our body in a state of suspense which blocks its right functioning.

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BREATH AND LIFE/ WHO IS ALIVE?

Breath does not give life, rather breath is a function of life. As long as one is breathing, one lives. When the breath ceases, one dies. Yet it is not our true being and consciousness that lives or dies in this process but only our identification with the body. At death, the life-force does not cease. It simply ends its connection with the physical body. It ceases to function through the physical but the other dimensions of its existence continue.

In the process of breathing we are connecting with both outer and inner sources of Prana or the life-force. It is not the outer breath, the breath of matter (Prakriti) which allows us to live. It is the inner breath, the breath of the Spirit (Purusha) that alone gives life. In the process of breathing the breath of matter is enlivened by the breath of the Spirit and our vitality thereby is increased and sustained.

Actually there is no Prana on the outside. There are the forces of nature (Prakriti) but these are essentially inanimate (jada), no more than combinations of the various elements. Matter, what is observable, what has form, whether gross or subtle, is not alive and cannot give us life. It can be animated but it is not itself the source or power of that animation. In the process of breathing it is the inner Prana or life-force which vitalizes the air taken in from the outside. The air from the outside, as subtle

matter, can serve as a fuel and a vehicle for the life-force but it should not be confused with the life-force itself. Prana-filled air, such as we get in nature, does not really contain life, it has simply been energized by the inner life-force, the cosmic spirit.

In other words, in breathing we do not really take in the life-force. We merely take in the air or oxygen (which, as above, is inherently lifeless). What extracts life energy from the air is the primary Prana or life-force within us. Through the breath it is able to project its life energy into the physical body. By an analogy we could say that the primary life-force is like a fire, the air we breathe is its fuel, and the light and warmth it produces is our physical life. However, the primary life-force has its own dimension of immortality above any manifest existence. This is the Divine and inextinguishable fire. It does not depend upon its physical fuel for its existence but only for its manifestation.

By this we see that breathing is not necessary for life. Life is eternal and infinite. Breathing is only necessary for the projection of the life force upon the physical body. It is not life itself that is being sustained in the process of breathing, it is only the connection of life with the inanimate body. This is the bondage of the soul to embodied existence, the reflection of its ignorance, desire, attachment and karma. Breath is not just a sign of life, it is a sign that the immortal life of the soul is being confused with the mortal life of the body. As long as we have not mastered our breath, as long as we cannot disconnect our sense of life from the physical body, we must be prey to all the illusion and sorrow of the outer world.

The breath is the pump which allows the life-force, which is infinite and eternal, to circulate a portion or reflection of itself through the physical. When this pump is functioning well we feel more vitality on the physical level. When it is functioning poorly, we feel sick or debilitated. However, we have become so caught in this process that we have lost our connection with the life-force in its own right. We wrongly believe that it is the outer air that gives or sustains our life. We associate lack of air with our own death.

It is possible to connect directly with the life-force. In this we transcend all manifest or material existence, go beyond all bodies or forms, and merge into the source of life which is eternal. This is the true goal of human life, as in human beings life becomes conscious and seeks its origin. It is possible to connect directly with the source of life. This renders the physical body immobile but it does not kill it. We see this condition in yogis in Samadhi in whom the physical body is in a state of deep sleep.

This means that the life-force is no longer identified with

the body. This process also occurs, to a limited extent, naturally in deep sleep. The state of deep sleep is our connection with the cosmic life-energy that allows for renewal of body and mind. Hence if we cannot get enough deep sleep we must be unhealthy. Note we naturally breathe deeply in deep sleep.

To connect directly with the Prana or life-force we must detach our mind from its identification with the body and the senses. While we may not be able to do this entirely, we can all benefit by centering our life-force within, by some meditation or chanting. It is the internalization of the life-force which allows it to be renewed.

What identifies the life-force with the body is thought. It is the primary thought, the "I am the body" thought or self-image which sustains this process. As long as this occurs we project our life-force outwardly and lose our connection with the source of life within.

YOGIC BREATHING

The goal of yogic breathing is not just to give us a deeper and fuller breath or to better connect us with external sources of energy. It is to connect us with our internal source, our only true source of life in the Spirit.

Nature seeks the Spirit. If we surrender to nature, which is the cosmic life-force, it takes us into the Spirit. This is why being in nature facilitates spiritual development. Similarly, on an inner level if we open to the power of nature within us, which is our inner Prana or life-force, that also takes us to the Spirit.

Udana, the ascending life-force, prevails in Nature. Where there is the artificial, as in an urban environment, or where the energies of nature are stagnant, as in marsh lands, then the forces of Apana, the descending force, prevail.

Hence in conscious breathing we focus on the source of the energy of life. This comes to us via the third eye. When we breathe the inner life-force comes to us through the third eye. If we link our breath with the third eye it becomes vitalized on an inner level. In inhalation this inner life-force moves up the spine. In exhalation it moves down the spine. When it moves up the spine it allows the external breath to be drawn in. When it moves down the spine it allows the external breath to be expelled.

The purpose of yogic breathing then is to bring in the inner Prana and get it to circulate in the physical and astral bodies, through the nervous system and the subtle channels (nadis). It is a way of connecting with the Divine life-force and requires an aspiration to ascend to it.

Yogic breathing is to energize the breath with the higher life-force of the Spirit through the power of conscious awareness. It is not just to make the lungs stronger but to bring the energy of consciousness into breathing, to bring the energy of consciousness through the breath into the body. The breath comes from the Spirit and leaves with it.

PRANA, OJAS AND TEJAS

Prana is the subtle essence of the life-force and of Vata. Ojas is the subtle essence of the vital fluids and of Kapha. Tejas is the subtle essence of perception and of Pitta. All three are interrelated and interdependent.

Ojas serves as the fluid that holds Prana. It is the wire through which the Pranic current can flow. Conversely, Prana energizes Ojas. It dries it up and transmutes it.

If Prana is too high it can dry Ojas out and thereby cause enervation. If Prana is too low it can fail to convert Ojas and cause lethargy.

To practice Pranayama rightly we must build Ojas. This is done through celibacy or moderation in sex, eating Ojas building foods and tonic herbs, and by the cultivation of peace, faith and devotion. This gives enough Ojas to hold the Prana we develop through Pranayama. To develop Pranic energy through Pranayama without developing Ojas will cause Vata disorders in the long run.

Similarly if we are accumulating Ojas, as through the practice of moderation in sex or eating Ojas containing foods, we must also do Pranayama to convert it. Otherwise it will accumulate and become heavy and by a gravitational force draw us to disperse its energy through some form of sensory pleasure.

Tejas also rests on Ojas. If we increase the critical capacity of the mind, our power of discrimination, without increasing Ojas, we will literally burn ourselves up. Spiritual knowledge can only burn if fed with the fuel of love.

Prana also energizes Tejas, like wind a fire. If we do not develop the Prana it will be difficult to keep our Tejas going and developing. Pranayama aids in developing the acuity of our perception this way.

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PART III. LESSON 13

1. How can we improve absorption of the Prana through the skin?
2. How can we improve absorption of the Prana through the food that we eat?
3. What are some ways of cleansing the nasal passages?
4. Why is it important to cleanse the tongue daily?
5. How can we improve absorption in the small intestine?

6. What are some important ways whereby we lose our life-energy?
7. Why do we say that Prana does not come from the oxygen we breathe?
8. How does Ojas relate to the process of Pranayama?
9. How do Prana and water relate?

10. How do the different Doshas accumulate in the lungs?
11. What is the role of Prana in health and disease?
12. What is yogic breathing?

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PART III.
APPENDIX

SUMMARY OF INTEGRAL HEALING SYSTEM

The human being is composed of different bodies or different layers, each of which has its necessary function. Holistic healing must involve a healing of all these bodies and an integration of their function. Each has a particular composition. Each has its own derangements and signs and symptoms of wrong functioning. Relative to each are appropriate diagnostic tools. Each has its appropriate healing substance, its appropriate healing exercises and healing methods. Each has its immunity function; that is, its action to maintain the organic integrity of the entire system.

This is only a general outline here. Treatment methods will differ as to whether we are treating hyper or hypofunctioning of the bodies.

Treatment on an inner level is always more direct and effective but harder to approach. Treatment on an outer level is more superficial but easier to begin. Therefore, our examination will be from the outside in. This material supplements that on YOGA AND AYURVEDIC PSYCHOLOGY in the second part of the course.

THE THREE BODIES AND FIVE SHEATHS

I. PHYSICAL or GROSS BODY (Sthula Sharira) and Component Sheath

1. PHYSICAL SHEATH (Annamaya Kosha)

COMPOSITION--------food and water primarily (the gross elements)
DERANGEMENTS-------physical disease
DIAGNOSTIC METHOD--medical (pulse, tongue, abdomen, signs and symptoms, medical testing)
HEALING SUBSTANCE--food, water, herbs
TREATMENT METHODS--diet, herbs, body work (exercise, asana, postural integration), preservation of vital fluids
IMMUNITY FUNCTION--to ward off pathogens, to maintain integrity of the physical body

II. PSYCHOLOGICAL--ASTRAL or SUBTLE BODY (Sukshma Sharira)

COMPOSITION--------thoughts, emotions, impressions
DERANGEMENT--------psychological diseases, auric imbalance or perforation, nervous and vitality disorders
DIAGNOSTIC METHOD--astrology, psychology, yoga, occult methods
HEALING SUBSTANCE--breath, positive thoughts, emotions and impressions, sound (mantra, music), color, gems
TREATMENT METHODS--gems, color therapy, breathing practises, mantras, visualization, devotional meditation, art therapy, past life therapy, exorcism, shamanism
IMMUNITY FUNCTION--to ward off negative astral influences, to maintain the integrity of the astral body

--THE THREE COMPONENT SHEATHS OF THE ASTRAL BODY--

1. VITAL or BREATH SHEATH (Pranamaya Kosha)

COMPOSITION--------breath (chi, prana, life-force), impressions
DERANGEMENT--------disturbance in harmony of breath, constriction of life-force, sensory derangements, nervous disturbance, diseases of nervous system
DIAGNOSTIC METHOD--examination of breath and life-force, examination of capacity for impressions, examination of the senses
HEALING SUBSTANCE--life-energy, positive impressions
TREATMENT METHODS--breathing exercises (pranayama, chi gung), gathering of right impressions, gems, color-therapy
IMMUNITY FUNCTION--to ward off negative life-energy

2. EMOTIONAL SHEATH (Manomaya Kosha)

COMPOSITION--------emotions, imagination
DERANGEMENT--------emotional imbalance, wrong or imbalanced relationships, worry, gossip, neurosis, delusions, hallucinations, insanity
DIAGNOSTIC METHOD--psychology, astrology, psychic and occult methods
HEALING SUBSTANCE--positive emotions, right relationship, creative release
TREATMENT METHODS--psychology, sound (mantra, music), visualization, devotional meditation, artistic expression
IMMUNITY FUNCTION--to ward off negative emotions

3. MENTAL SHEATH (Vijnanamaya Kosha, lower function)

COMPOSITION--------thought (calculation)
DERANGEMENT--------loss of memory, poor reasoning ability, mental confusion, inability to talk or communicate, neurosis, insanity
DIAGNOSTIC METHOD--psychology, astrology, yoga
HEALING SUBSTANCE--positive thoughts
TREATMENT METHODS--mental exercises, mantra, yoga, concentration, spiritual study, meditation
IMMUNITY FUNCTION--to ward off negative thoughts

III. SPIRITUAL--CAUSAL BODY (Karana Sharira)

COMPOSITION--------past life tendencies, will of the soul
DERANGEMENT--------lack of soul purpose in life, lack of will, lack of creativity
DIAGNOSTIC METHOD--yoga, astrology, spiritual methods
HEALING SUBSTANCE--soul energy, positive will, faith, love, awareness
TREATMENT METHODS--self-inquiry, self-examination, surrender to the Divine, past life therapy
IMMUNITY FUNCTION--to ward off ignorance and sorrow

--THE TWO COMPONENT SHEATHS OF CAUSAL BODY--

1. INTELLIGENCE SHEATH (Vijnanamaya Kosha, higher function)

COMPOSITION--------will, determination, perception
DERANGEMENT--------untruthfulness, lack of self-will, lack of self-control, hallucination, inability to discern reality, insanity
DIAGNOSTIC METHOD--self-examination, soul examination
HEALING SUBSTANCE--truth
TREATMENT METHODS--self-inquiry, formless meditation, yoga of perception
IMMUNITY FUNCTION--to ward off illusion and falsehood

2. BLISS SHEATH (Anandamaya Kosha)

COMPOSITION--------love, awareness
DERANGEMENT--------unhappiness, sorrow, lack of creativity, lack of soul direction, lack of bliss
DIAGNOSTIC METHOD--self-examination, soul-examination
HEALING SUBSTANCE--love, awareness
TREATMENT METHODS--self-inquiry, surrender to the Divine
IMMUNITY FUNCTION--to ward off sorrow

IV. SPIRITUAL BEING-----True Self (Atman or Purusha)
Inner being, consciousness, spiritual reality, essence, enlightened awareness

On this level there are no derangements. This is the place of transcendence where harmony always exists. Yet it can respond to the needs of the different bodies that manifest from it in whatever way is appropriate.

THE THREE BODIES AND THE SEVEN CHAKRAS
The different bodies manifest primarily through certain chakras.

PHYSICAL BODY
1. ROOT CENTER: Gross physical
2. SEX CENTER: Subtle physical, hormonal system

ASTRAL BODY
3. NAVEL CENTER: Vital body
4. HEART CENTER: Emotional body
5. THROAT CENTER: Mental body

CAUSAL BODY
6. THIRD EYE: Intelligence principle
7. HEAD CENTER: Bliss principle

SPIRITUAL BEING
Spiritual Heart, just to the right of the center of the chest

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APPENDIX
ADDITIONAL NOTES ON AYURVEDIC HERBAL PREPARATIONS

MEDICATED HONEY

Honey is often recommended for taking along with herbs. As it is a predigested food, it aids in the digestion of the herbs, thus helping to conduct them to the deeper tissues. It also adds its properties to them (expectorant, laxative, tonic, rejuvenative). For example, most herbs for coughs and colds are taken with honey, like dry ginger, calamus and honey for cough, congestion and sore throat.

Honey can be added to herbal teas, or powdered herbs can be added to honey and taken directly with the honey rather than water. Herbal powders can also be added to the honey and stored. These we called "medicated honeys."

Medicated honeys are primarily for ease of taking, as the honey counters the bad taste of herbs. They also aid in the storage of herbs as medicates honeys can last for long periods of time (over a year), particularly if refrigerated. However, the properties of honey can also either enhance those of the herbs, or be used to counter their possible side effects, as honey moderates the potencies of herbs and makes them easier for the body to assimilate.

This method is particularly useful because many Ayurvedic herbs are only available in powdered form because the F.D.A. has not allowed Ayurvedic pills and prepared forms to be imported directly into this country. Making ones own medicated honeys can be an additional way to prescribe herbs for your clients. It is also an interesting experiment to do to learn more about making herbal formulas and preparations.

Procedure

First get a board or table on which to work. Any wooden board, like a bread board, is good.

Put some oil on the board (so the honey does not stick), preferably ghee (as it is tridosha). Other oils with tend to add their properties to the mixture. Hence use the proper oil as per constitution (sesame or almond for Vata; sunflower or coconut for Pitta; mustard for Kapha).

Also add some ghee or oil to your hands.

Then take a measured amount of honey, for example, four ounces.

Then take the powdered herbs you wish to add into the honey, usually one ounce of powder will work to four ounces of honey, but note results.

It can be helpful to put some of the powdered herbs on top of the oil first. Then add the honey and add in more of the powdered herbs, like kneading bread.

Continue adding more powdered herbs until the honey no longer sticks but forms a defined mass and no longer sticks. You may need to use a little more oil on the board or on your hands.

The medicated honey mass can then be rolled or cut off into smaller size pieces or even small pills. It can taken with water, herb tea, or any suitable vehicle, usually one-half to one teaspoon of the medicated honey.

Formulas---

Honey Tonic

Take 100 gas. of honey. Mix into it the powders of 12 gas. Ashwagandha, 12 grams Shatavari, 3 grams Pippali and 3 grams Dry Ginger.

Honey Formula For Coughs

Take 100 gas. of honey. Mix into it Dry Ginger, Cinnamon, Cloves, Bayberry and Thyme, 5 grams each. Mix in equal parts warm water before taking. Take like a cough syrup.

MEDICATED ALOE GEL

Aloe vera is an herb, almost an entire pharmacopeia, in itself. It can also be used as a vehicle (anupana) or means of taking other herbs. In this way it is a good vehicle for taking many anti-Pitta herbs, but can be useful for Kapha and sometimes Vata conditions as well.

Yet aloe, in the gel or liquid form, can also be used as a base for other herbal preparations. For such Medicated Aloes the powders of certain herbs are merely added to the aloe vera gel, mixed and allowed to set for a day or two. Generally spices are used for this purpose. Taken with aloe spices like ginger or coriander gain tonic properties. They also help counter some the cold nature of Aloe.

For this purpose one can scrape the gel out of the actual aloe plants (which can be time consuming), or simply use various commercial aloe preparations (some of which may have preservatives). Commercial aloe vera juices are nothing but the diluted gel.

Generally one-half to one teaspoon of herbs is added to about one tablespoon of the aloe gel. Or for eight ounces of the gel, an ounce of powdered herbs can be added. As different from the Medicated Honeys the preparation should be such that the Aloe remains in a liquid form.

Such formulas are usually taken in dosages of one or two teaspoons morning and evening, though digestive formulas may be taken before meals.

ALOE COMBINATIONS

Turmeric

Taking turmeric in an aloe gel base is one of the most common preparations. It is Tridoshic in nature. It stimulates the liver, promotes the circulation of blood, cleanses the blood, eases menstruation, stops excess bleeding, and promotes the healing of sores or wounds.

Sandalwood

Sandalwood can be added to aloe gel for cleansing the blood, easing urination (for urinary tract infections), stimulating digestion, and calming the mind and emotions.

Gotu Kola

Gotu Kola (Brahmi) can be added to aloe gel for calming the mind, cleansing the blood, stopping bleeding, easing urination, calming excess sexual desire, building the blood and promoting the growth of hair.

Ginger Powder

Ginger powder can be added to aloe gel for stimulating digestion, regulating the sugar metabolism (regulating pancreas function), dispelling mucus.

Coriander Powder

Taken in aloe this helps cleanse the blood, stimulate the liver, counter allergies (particularly skin allergies but also sinus or food allergies).

Cardamom

Much like ginger powder, taken with aloe gel it is particularly good for the pancreas and sugar metabolism.

Sugar

Any raw or natural powdered sugar can be added to aloe gel preparations to improve their taste. It also helps increase the tonic properties of the formulas. Usually honey is not used because it is difficult to mix it with the cool gel or liquid.

ALOE FORMULAS

The following combinations are mild in action. They are not for acute conditions. They are neither strongly reducing or strongly tonifying but have a general balancing effect upon the system. The following are only examples, any number of such combinations can be made, but they are usually formulated emphasizing a particular side of Aloe's properties (blood purifier, liver tonic etc.).

1. Aloe Combination for the Liver
In eight ounces of aloe gel add
- Turmeric, Sandalwood, Gotu Kola, Coriander -
In equal parts up to one ounce

Generally Tridoshic but can aggravate Vata (in which case add dry ginger). Good for sluggish liver, impure blood (acne), diabetes, allergies, also helpful for many female disorders like PMS, etc.

2. Aloe Combination for the Female Reproductive system
In eight ounces of aloe gel add
- Turmeric, Manjishta, Gotu Kola, Shatavari -
In equal parts up to one ounce

Generally Tridoshic but can aggravate Vata (in which case add dry ginger). Good for dysmenorrhea, menopause (hot flashes), menorrhagia, venereal diseases (herpes), PMS etc.

3. Aloe Combination for Digestion (spleen, pancreas, stomach)
In eight ounces of aloe gel add
- Ginger, Turmeric, Cardamom, Cloves -
In equal parts up to one ounce

Good for Kapha and Vata but can aggravate Pitta (in which case replace the ginger and cloves with coriander and spearmint). Good for sugar addictions, hypoglycemia, but also for colds, flus, coughs and allergies.

4. Aloe Combination for the Urinary System
In eight ounces of aloe gel add
- Gotu Kola, Gokshura, Lemon Grass, Coriander -
In equal parts up to one ounce

Good for Pitta and Kapha but can aggravate Vata (in which case replace coriander and lemon grass with ginger and cinnamon). Good for difficult, burning or painful urination, urinary tract infections, bleeding, venereal diseases, genital herpes, excess sexual desire etc.

THE USE OF SPICES IN HERBAL FORMULAS

Whenever you make up an herbal formula it is good to add some spice to aid in digesting the formula. The amount of spice can be small, less than one-tenth the total formula. It can be according to Dosha.

For example, for Kapha you can use cayenne or ginger; for Pitta you can use turmeric or coriander; for Vata you can use ginger or fennel.

Or standard formulas can be used like Trikatu for Kapha and Vata and Avipattikar Churna for Pitta.

Pippali (Indian long pepper) is a good spice to use for strengthening the lungs or the reproductive system.

SUGAR

It is often good to take herbs with some natural sugars to counter their bad taste. Herbs can be taken or mixed with honey. They can also be taken or mixed with any natural sugars. Sucanet, a kind of dried sugar-cane juice, available at many natural food stores in this country, is particularly good. Ayurveda also uses powdered rock candy.

Spices can be taken along with sugar. This is particularly useful for colds and coughs. Formulas like Sitopaladi Churna are made this way. Generally any combination of one part sugar with one-half part spices like Dry Ginger, Cloves, Cinnamon, Cardamom or Pippali, is good for most initial stages of colds.

Tonics like Ashwagandha and Shatavari benefit by being taken with equal parts of a raw sugar. Other tonics like Vidari, Bala, Amalaki, Kapikacchu, Black or White Musali, etc., can be taken in this way.

In this way one can make various forms of herbal confections. The sugar will also act as a preservative.

The herbs Licorice or Stevia can also be used like sugar as flavoring agents. However, they require smaller dosages, as they are more sweet to the taste.

STARCHES

Starches can also be used to make the tastes of herbs milder. These include herbs like Lotus Seeds, Vidari, Gokshura, Comfrey Root, Marshmallow Root, or Slippery Elm. They are made into powders and taken along with the herbs. They are particularly good to take with tonics like Ashwagandha and Shatavari, whose taste is not always agreeable to people.

Tonic starch formulas (like Ashwagandha and Vidari) are useful to people who have a very weak digestion and have difficulty handling either sugars or spices. They are often taken along with a Kicharee (mung and basmati rice) diet until the digestion normalizes itself.

SALT

Salt, particularly rock salt, can be added to some spicy herbal mixtures or to herbal laxatives. Otherwise it is not commonly used. It is most commonly used with Asafoetida, but can also be used with Ginger as a digestive stimulant.

HERBAL CONFECTIONS

Combining herbs with spices, sugars and starches can be a good way to increase their properties and also make them taste better. In this way a variety of herbal confections can be made.

For herbal confections we take an herbal base. For a tonic formula we can use our standard tonics like Ashwagandha and Shatavari. Then we can add a starchy herb of similar property like Vidari, Lotus Seeds or Gokshura. Then we should add a small amount, less than one-tenth of the mixture, of the appropriate spices like Cinnamon, Dry Ginger, Cloves or Pippali. Then we can add equal amounts of a natural sugar. This produces the basic mixture.

To this powdered mixture ghee can be added. We can even lightly fry it in ghee. Or we can add some honey to it, or some water to make it into a paste.

Herbal confections can use other items. For example, sesame seeds or nuts like almonds can be used along with them, or sesame or nut butters. Dry fruit like raisins, dates, blueberries or jujubes can also be added. But any large items should be cut to small pieces.

While such items take a little experiment, like any new cooking practice, after a few times we can discover new combinations to make that are both tasty and efficacious in their healing properties.

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PART III. AYURVEDIC THERAPEUTIC METHODS, FINAL TEST

Answer all questions as peer instructions on final test Part I.

1. What are the six tastes?
2. How do they relate to the five elements?
3. How do they relate to the three humors?
4. What are their heating and cooling actions (virya)?

5. What is post-digestive effect (vipaka)?
6. What is special action (prabhava)?
7. What is the significance of dietary therapy in Ayurveda?
8. When is food better taken raw?
9. When is it better taken cooked?

10. What are some factors that reduce the quality of food?
11. What are the main qualities of fruit?
12. What are some of the special qualities of pomegranate?
13. What are the main qualities of cabbage family plants?
14. Why do nightshades cause trouble for many people.

15. What are the main qualities of beans?
16. What are the main uses of mung beans?
17. What is kicharee?
18. What are the main qualities of nuts?
19. What are some of the special properties of almonds?

20. What are the main properties of ghee?
21. What are the main qualities of dairy products?
22. What are the main qualities of yogurt?
23. What are some of the special properties of honey?
24. Why is meat generally not recommended in Ayurveda?

25. What is jaggary?
26. What are the main qualities of oils?
27. What are the main properties of sesame oil?
28. What are the main qualities of mustard oil?
29. What are the main qualities of spices?

30. What are some of the medical uses of salt?
31. How is rock salt used in Ayurveda?
32. What are the properties of vinegar?
33. What are the properties of asafoetida?
34. What are the properties of cayenne?

35. What are the properties of coriander?
36. What are the properties of garlic?
37. What are the properties of fennel?
38. What are the properties of ginger?
39. What are the properties of turmeric?

40. What is shilajit?
41. What are the properties of gotu kola?
42. What are the properties of calamus?
43. What are the properties of ashwagandha?
44. What are the properties of shatavari?

45. What are the main properties of long pepper (pippali, see YOGA OF HERBS)
46. How do tonification and reduction methods differ?
47. How do palliation and purification methods differ?
48. Outline palliation method for Pitta?
49. What is Pancha Karma?

50. What is the place of oleation and steam therapies (snehana and svedana) in Pancha Karma?
51. What is nasya?
52. Outline the use of purgation method.
53. Outline tonification method for Vata.
54. Name some important rejuvenative herbs for Kapha.

55. Outline rejuvenation of the mind (brahma rasayana).
56. What is aroma therapy?
57. Name some good flower fragrances for Pitta.
58. What are the properties of sandalwood oil?
59. What are the properties of wintergreen?

60. What are some good analgesic oils?
61. What are some good aromatic oils for Ojas?
62. What are sattvic colors?
63. Outline color therapy for Pitta.
64. What are the properties of green?

65. What are the properties of white?
66. How is gem therapy used in Ayurveda?
67. What are some good gems for Pitta?
68. How is mantra therapy used in Ayurveda?
69. What are some good mantras for calming the mind?

70. How can mantras be used to empower the healing process?
71. How do the three biological humors manifest from the Purusha?
72. Why is direct perception so important in Ayurveda?
73. Outline the levels of the mind and their different forms of nutrition?
74. What is the basic psychology of Vata-Kapha types? of Pitta-Kapha types? of Vata-Pitta types?

75. What are some treatment methods for Rasagata Pitta?
76. What are some treatment methods for Medogata Kapha?
77. What are some treatment methods for Majjagata Vata?
78. What is the role of the nostrils in the absorption of Prana?
79. What is the role of the colon in the absorption of Prana?

80. What is a neti pot?
81. Describe biospiritual versus bioenergetic medicine.
82. How does Vata accumulate on the level of the skin?
83. How does Pitta accumulate on the level of emotions?
84. How does Kapha accumulate on the level of thought?

85. What is the most important thing that you have learned from this course?
86. How do you plan to use the material in the course?
87. What kind of further study would you like to pursue based upon the course?
88. Any suggestions for improving the course?